

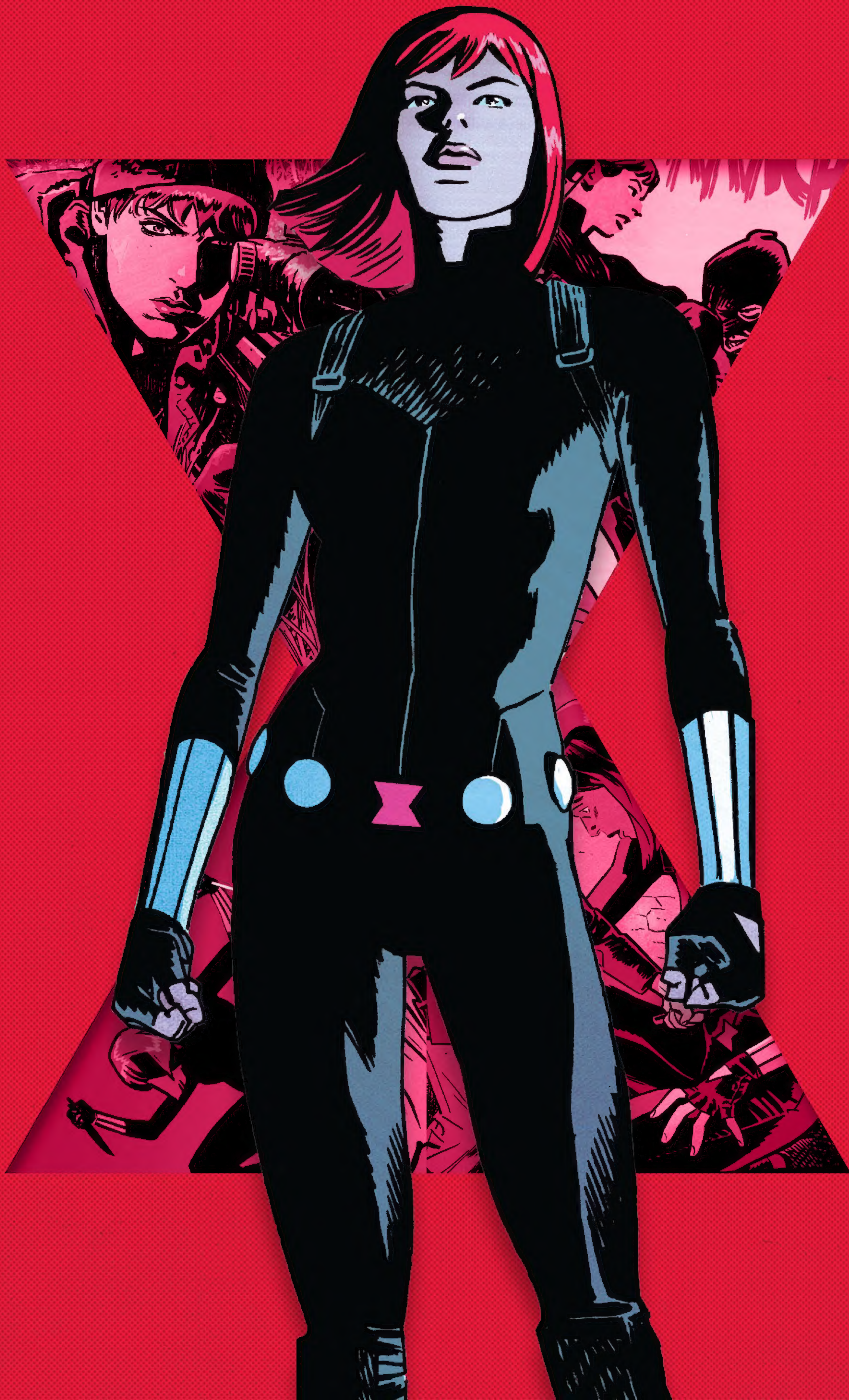
MARK WAID • CHRIS SAMNEE • MATTHEW WILSON

BLACK WIDOW

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION



MARVEL





BLACK WIDOW

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION

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FLASHBACK ART, ISSUE #11

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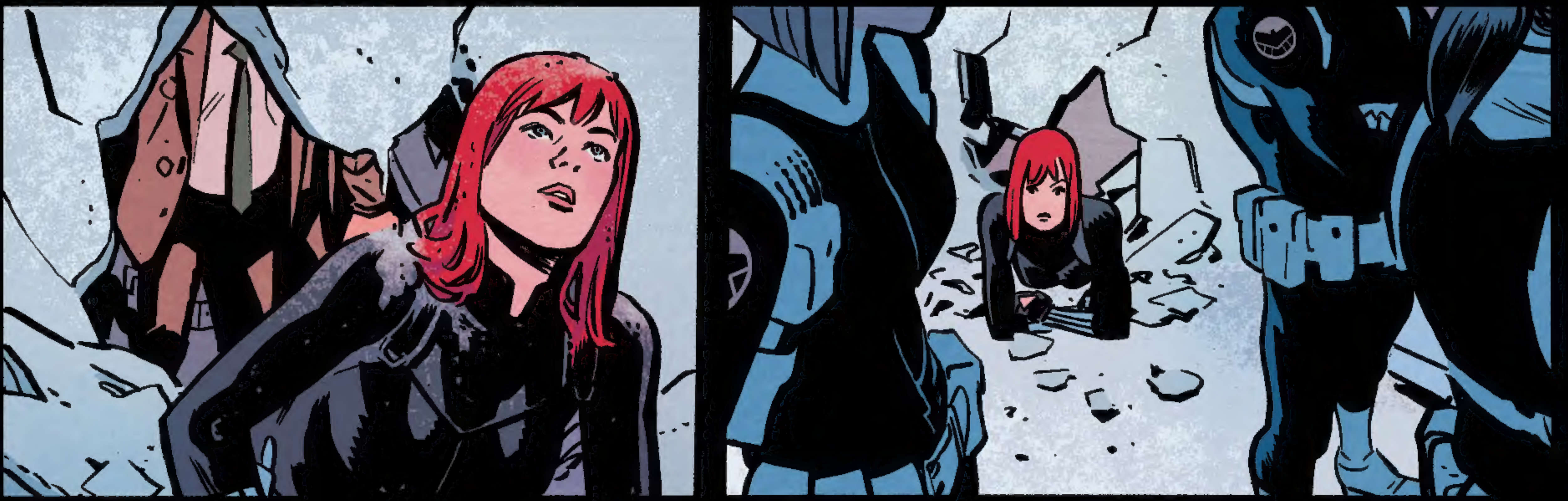
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C.B. CEBULSKI EDITOR IN CHIEF











HILL
ALWAYS SAID
YOU WERE
TOUGH.



FWUD



I AIN'T
IMPRESSED.
THAT ALL
YOU GOT,
YOU SKINNY
LITTLE--



BRANGH

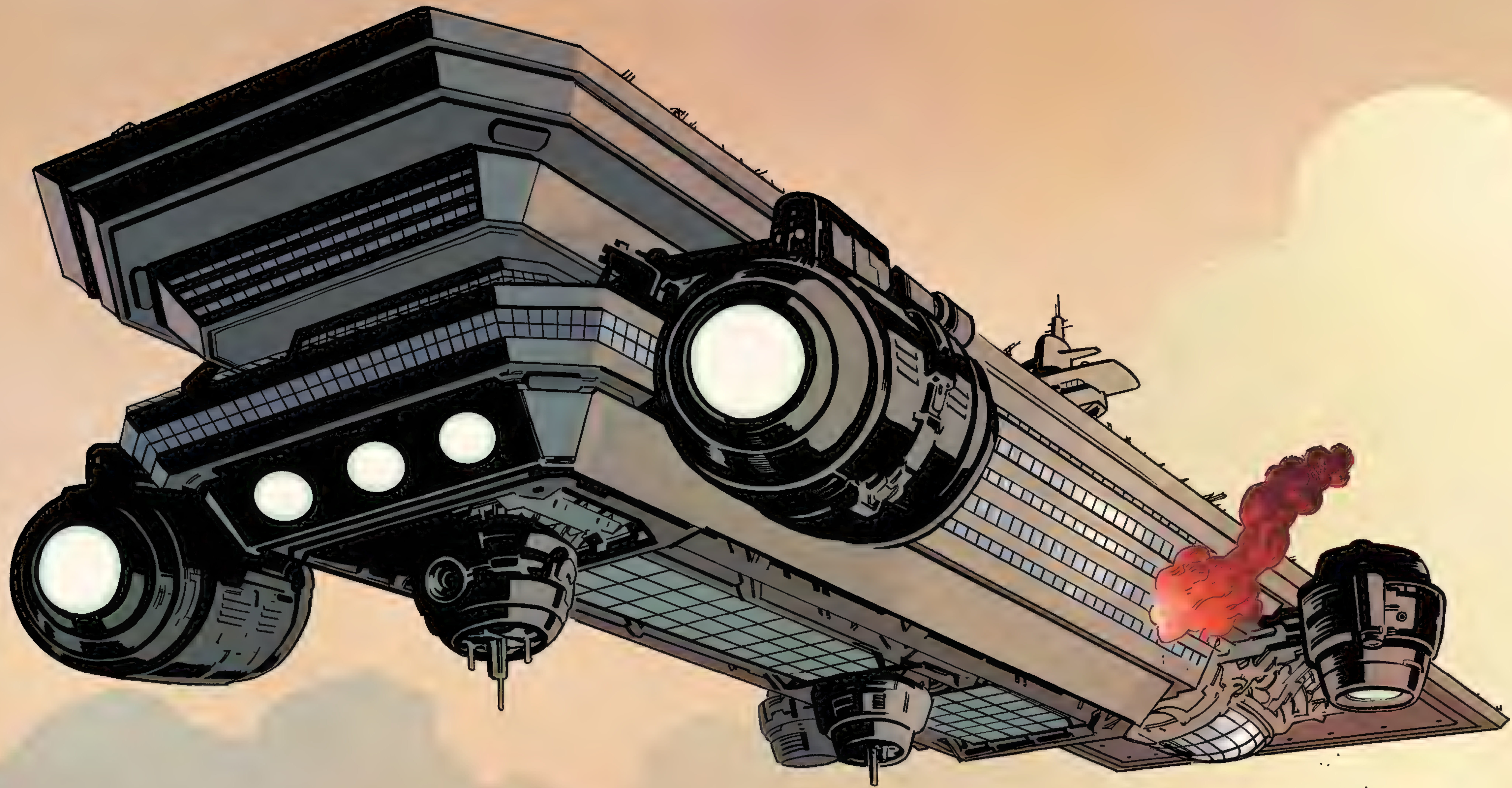


DAB
ID!
GED
HRR!



DEAD
END,
RED.





BLACK WIDOW



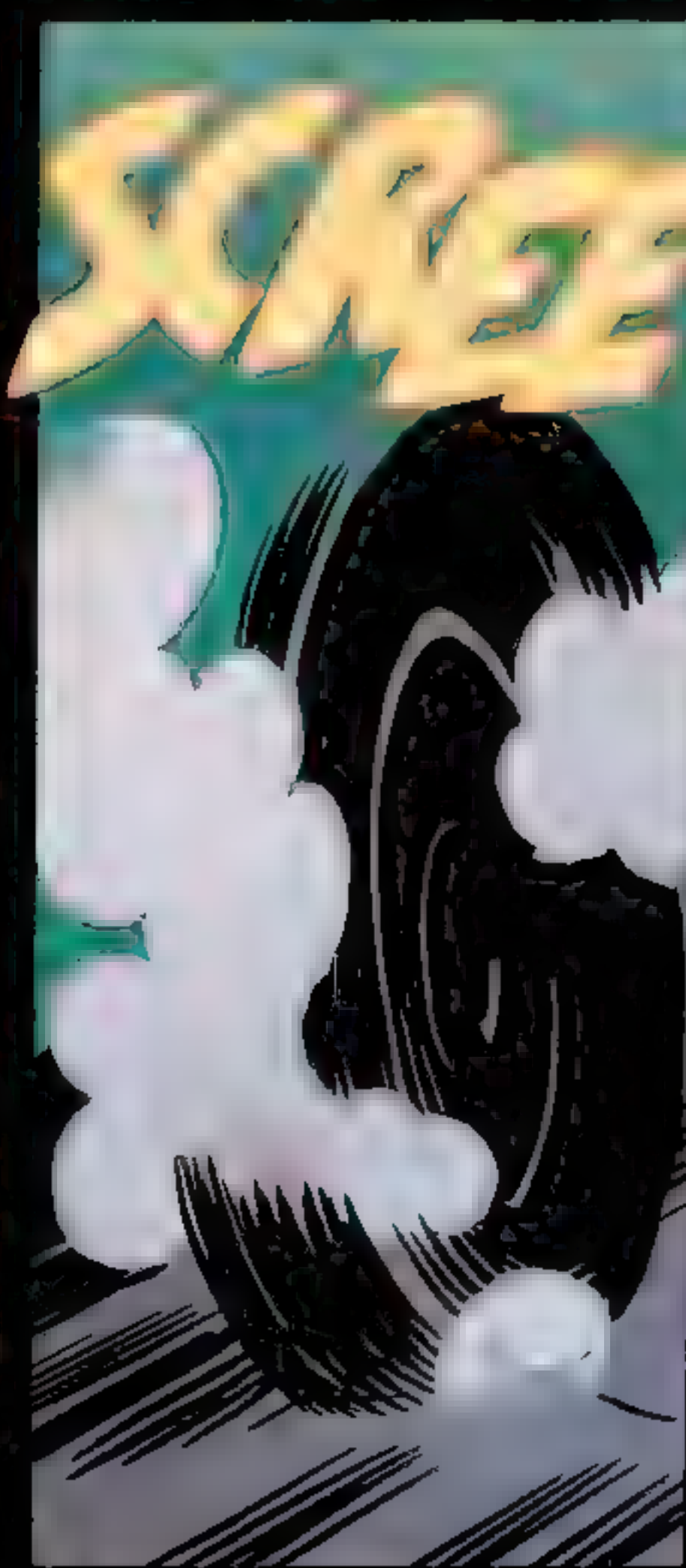
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SHE JUMPED?

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT SHE STOLE FROM US?

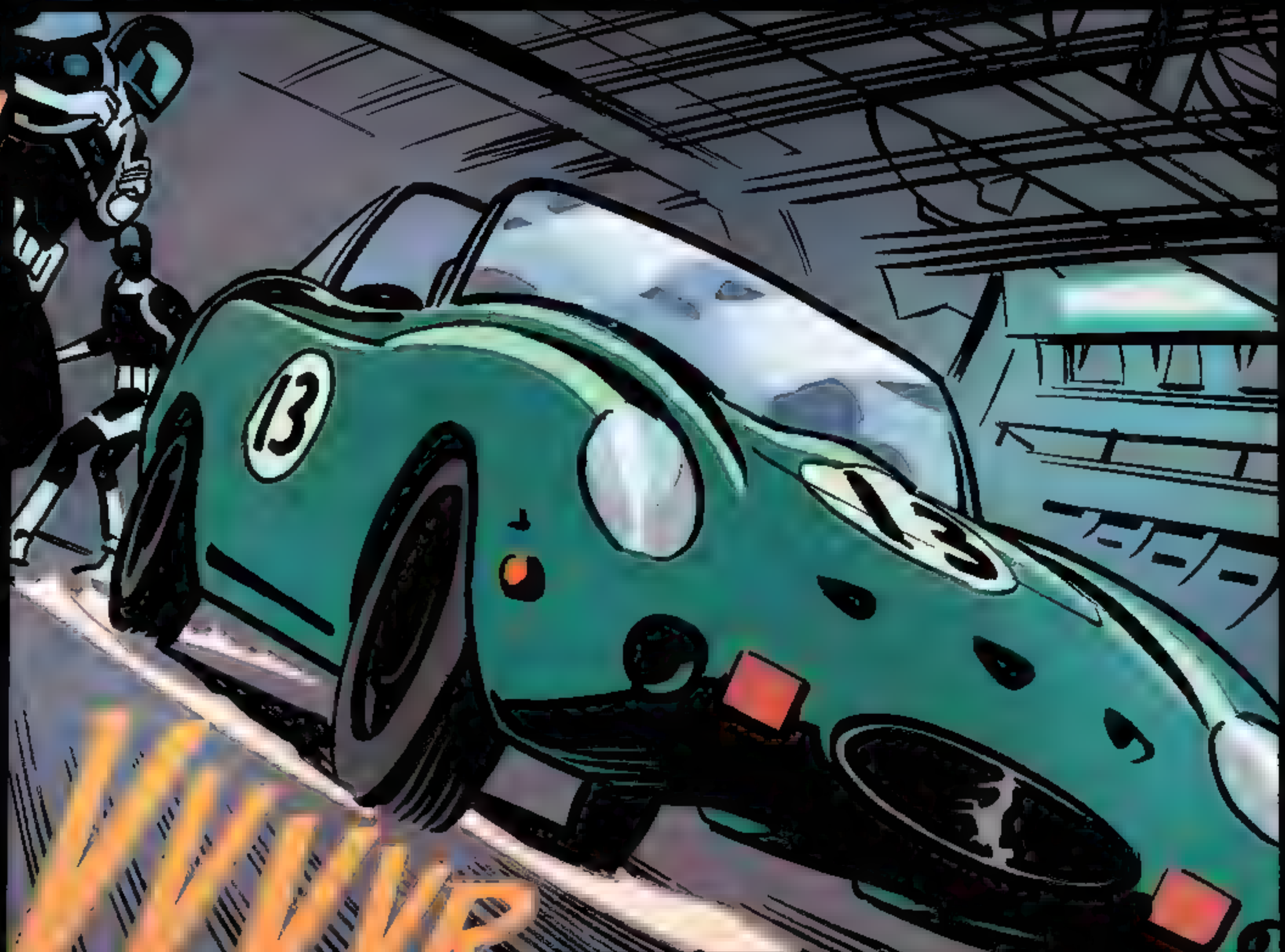
RECOVER HER!



SHINK



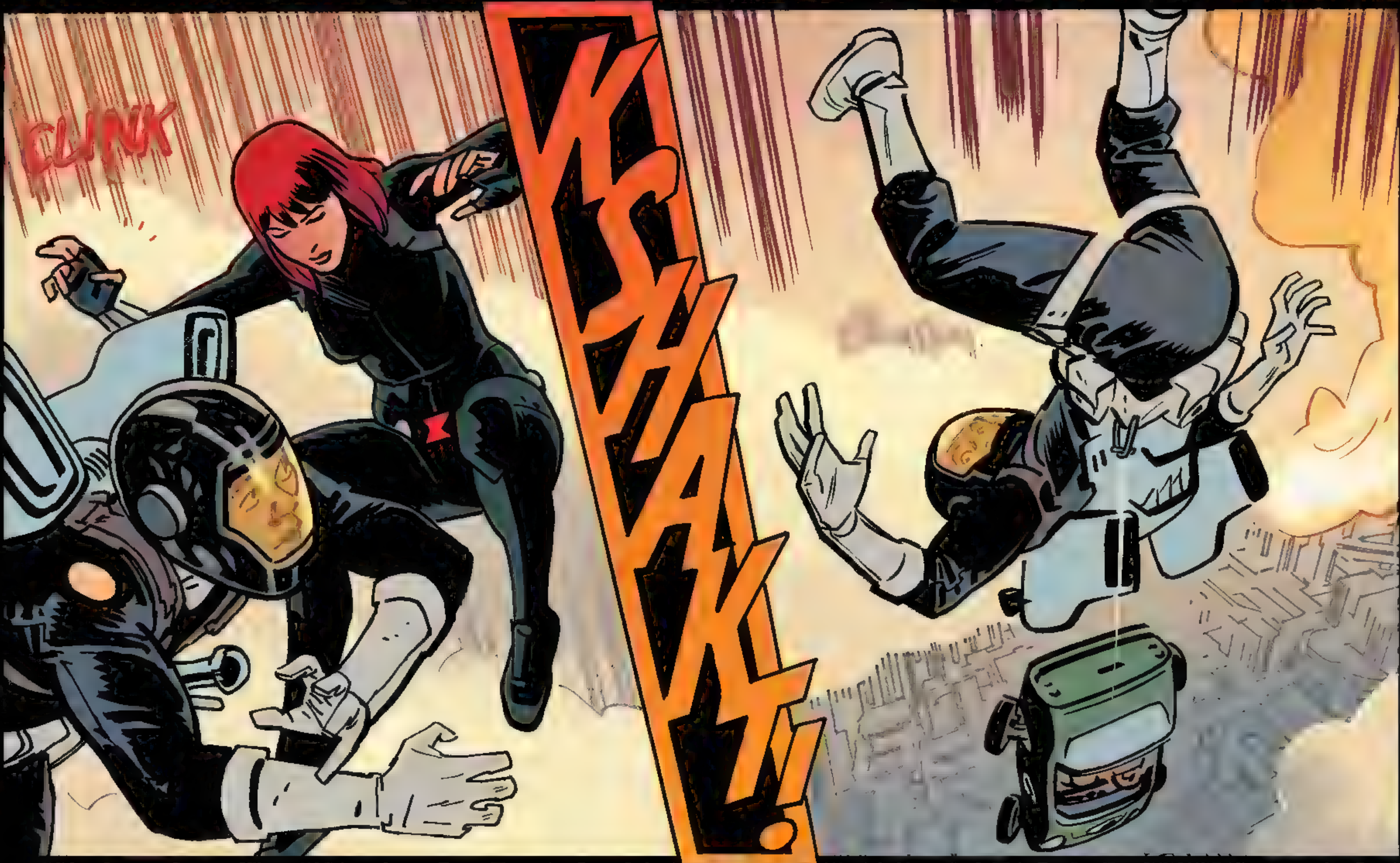
SCREE

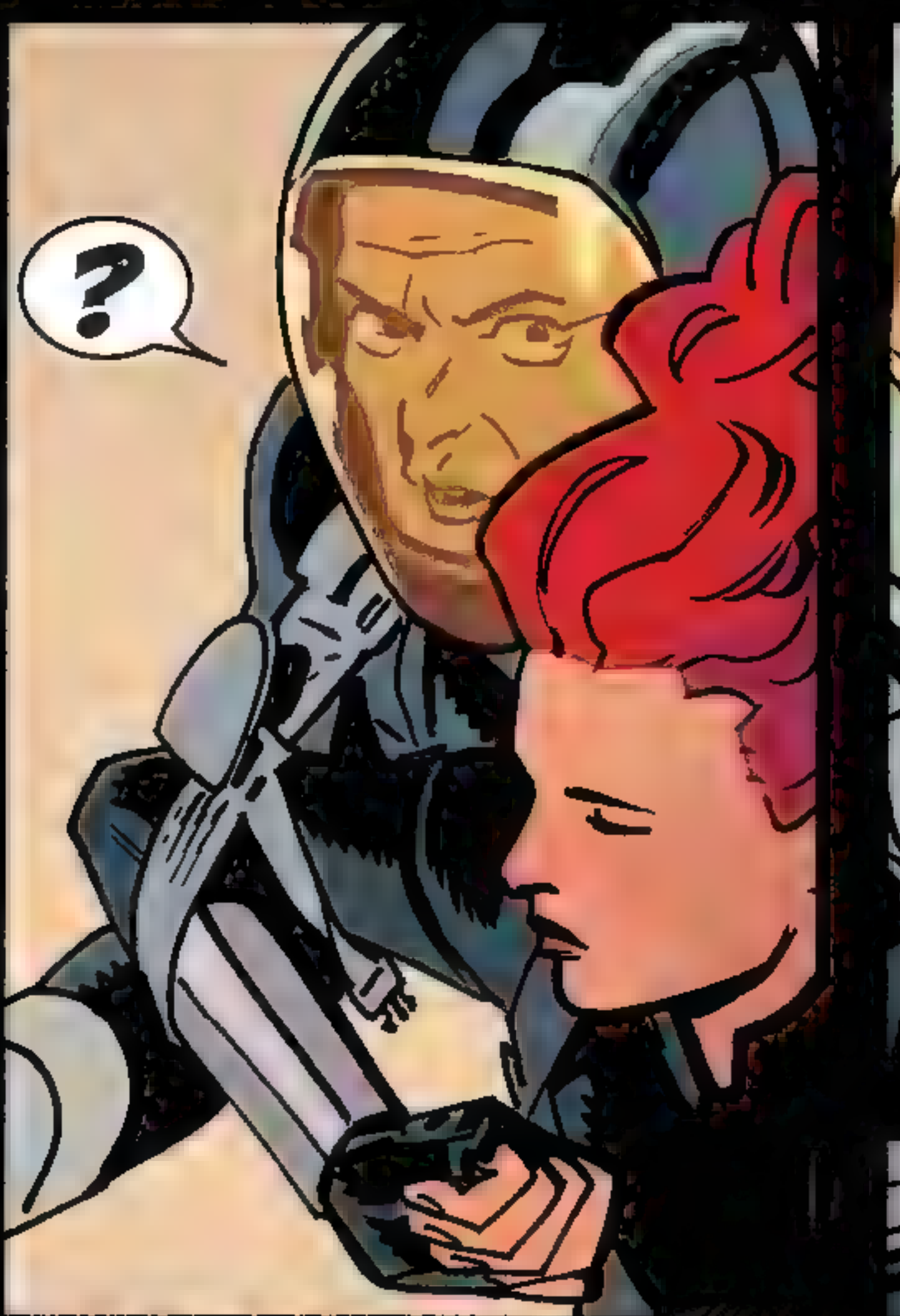


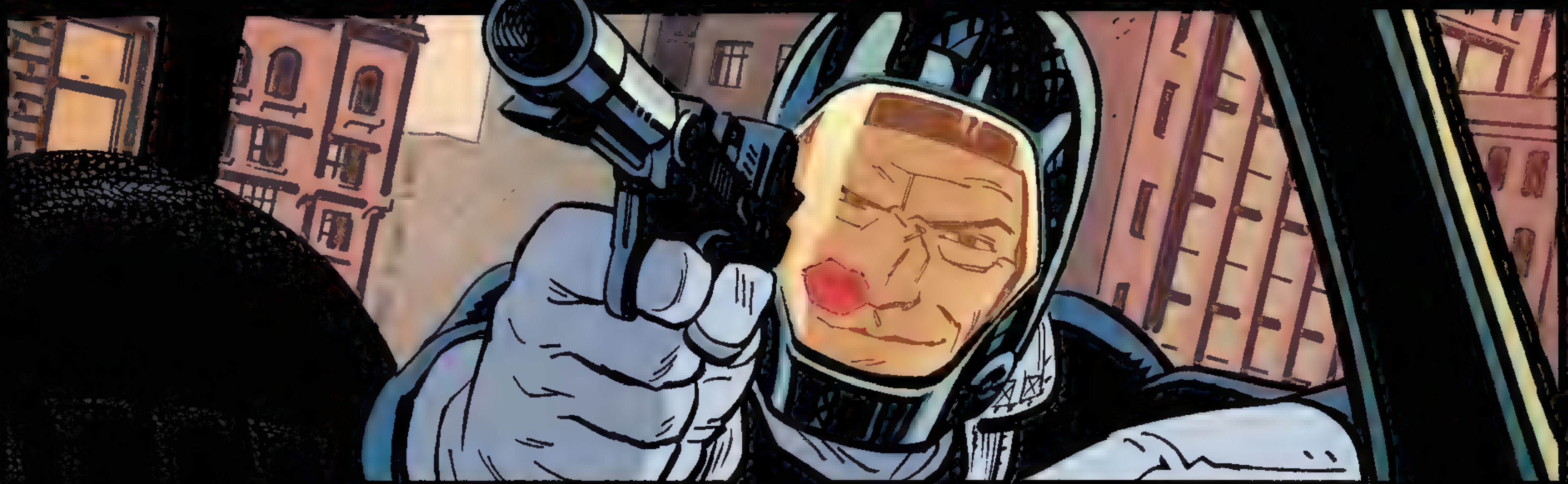
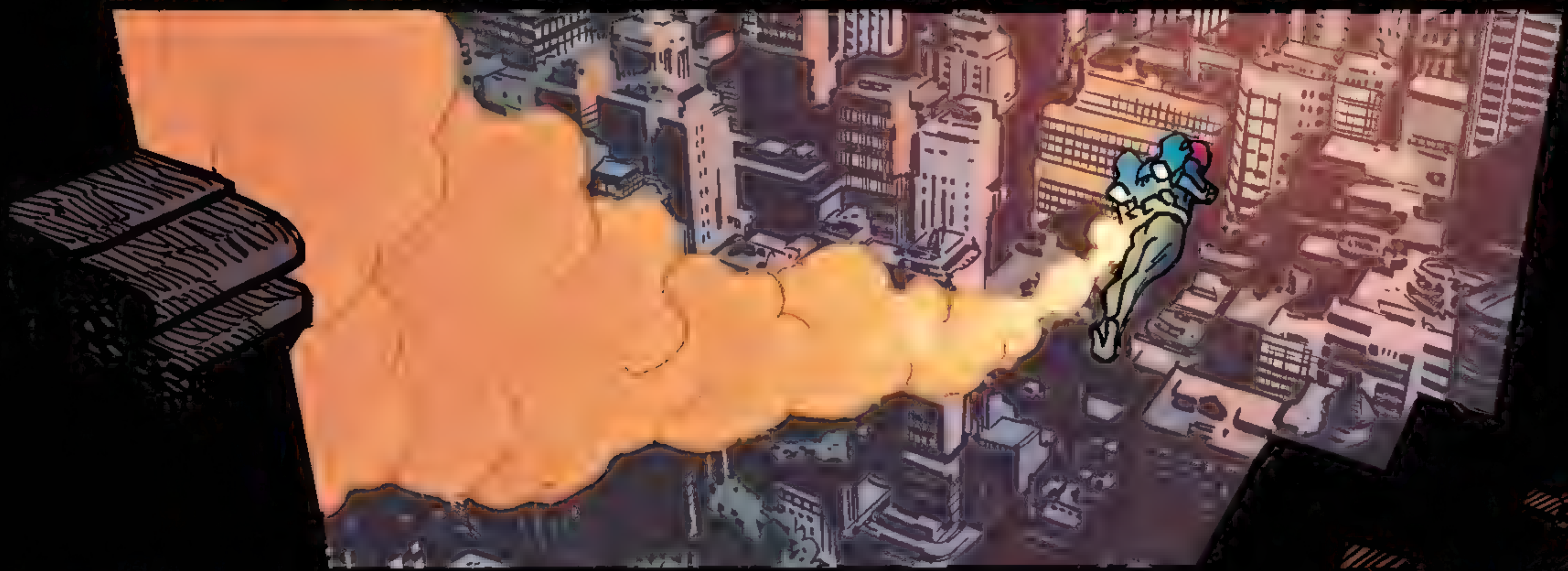
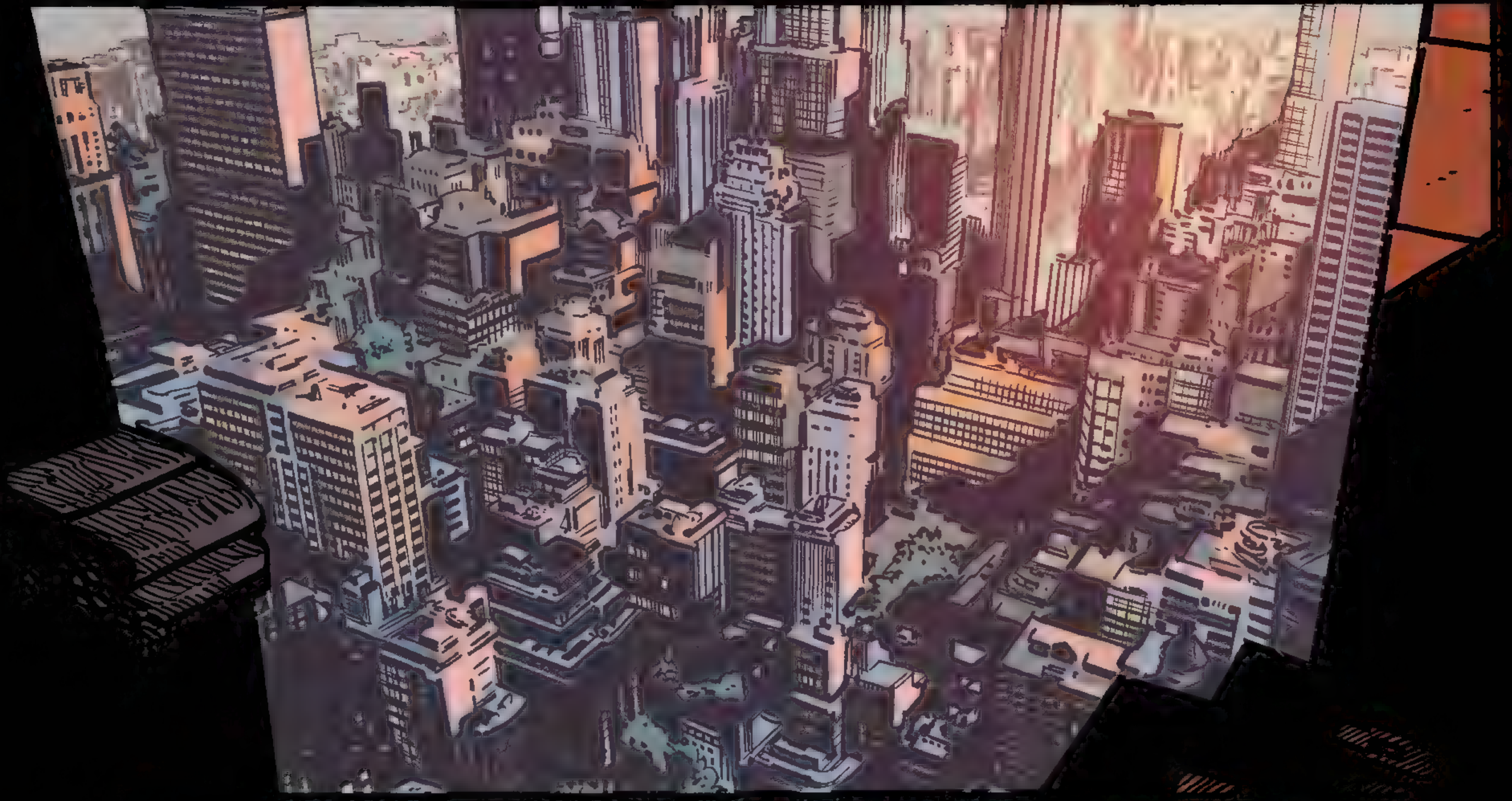
VVVVRRRRN



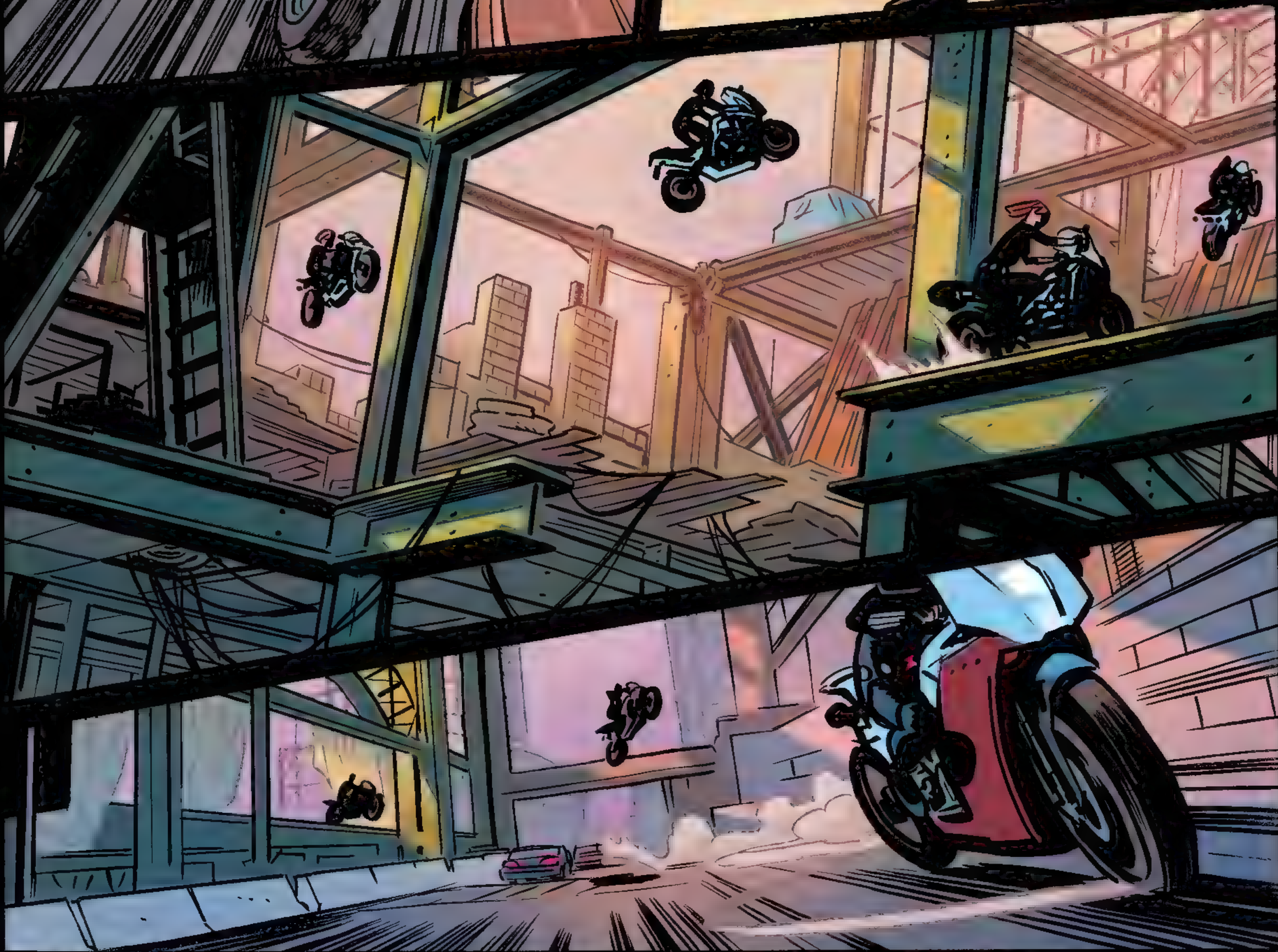
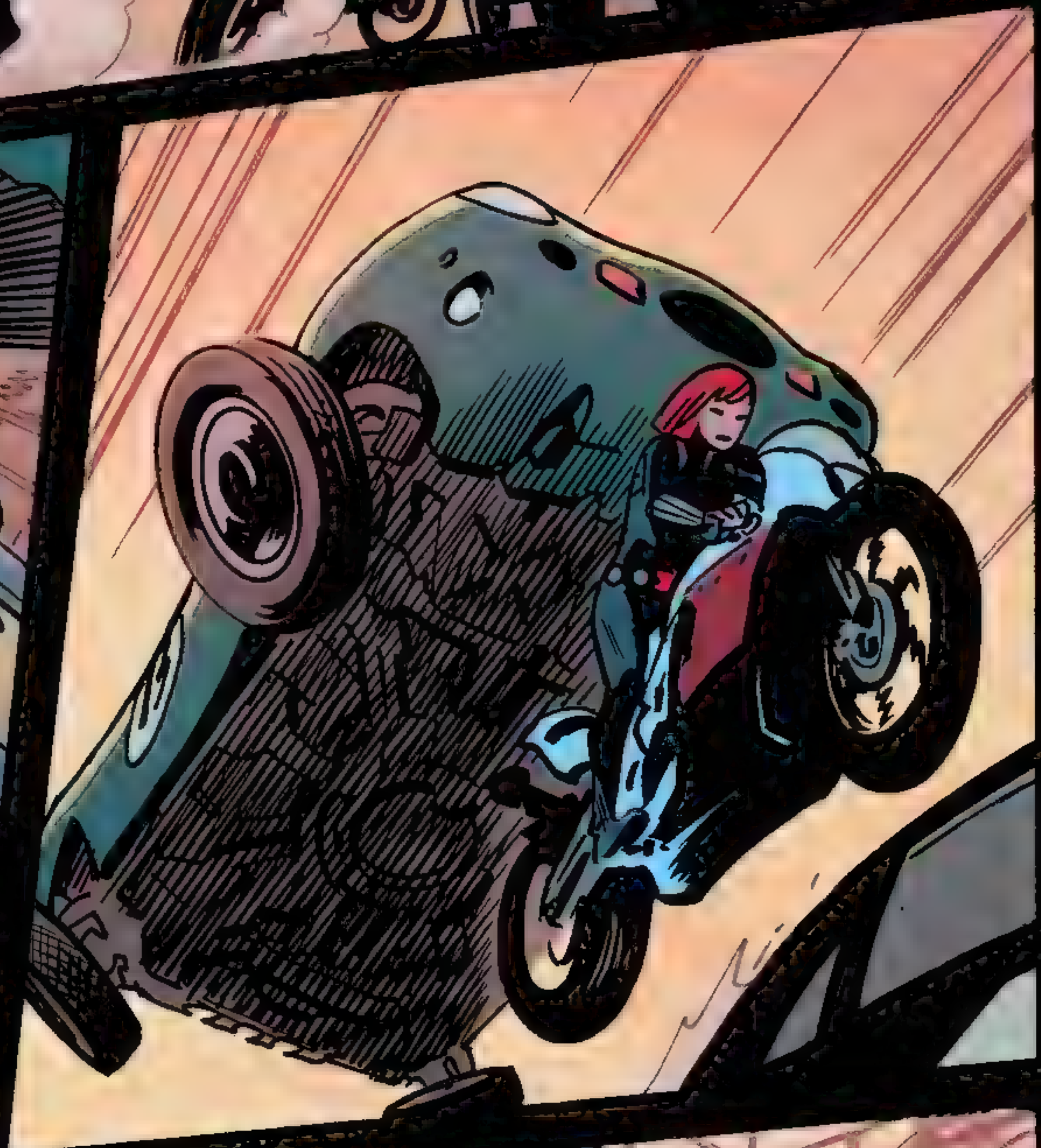
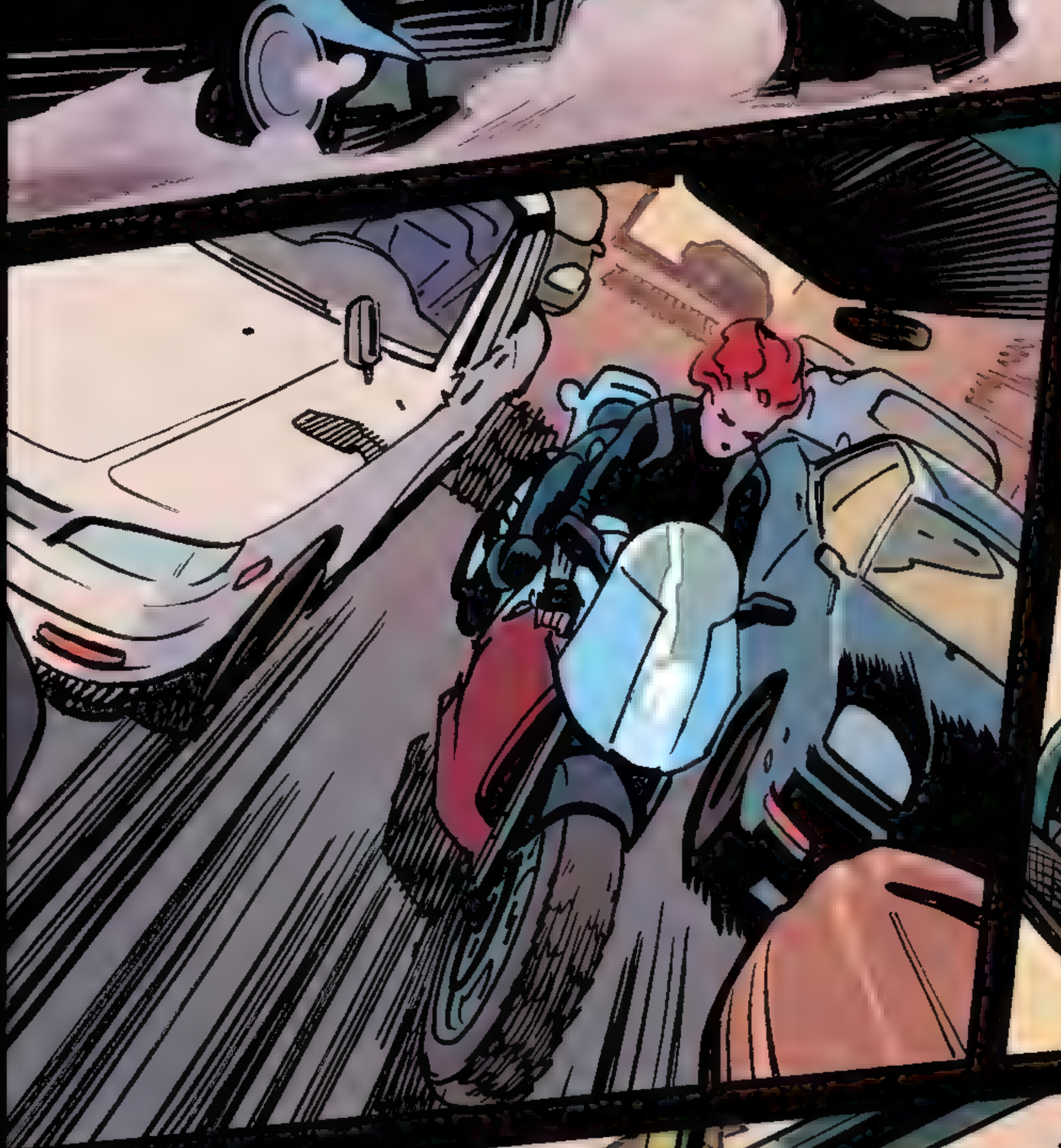


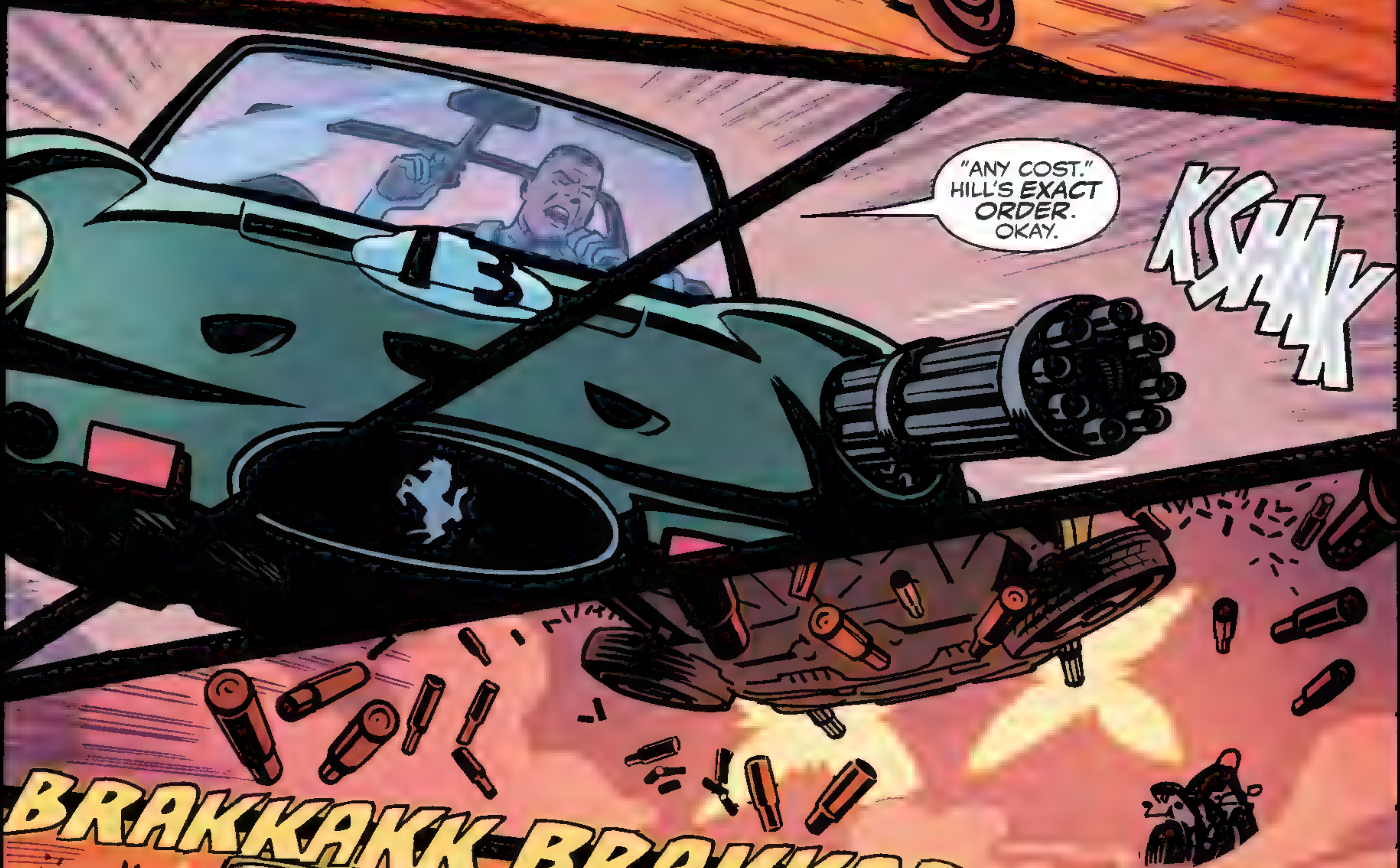




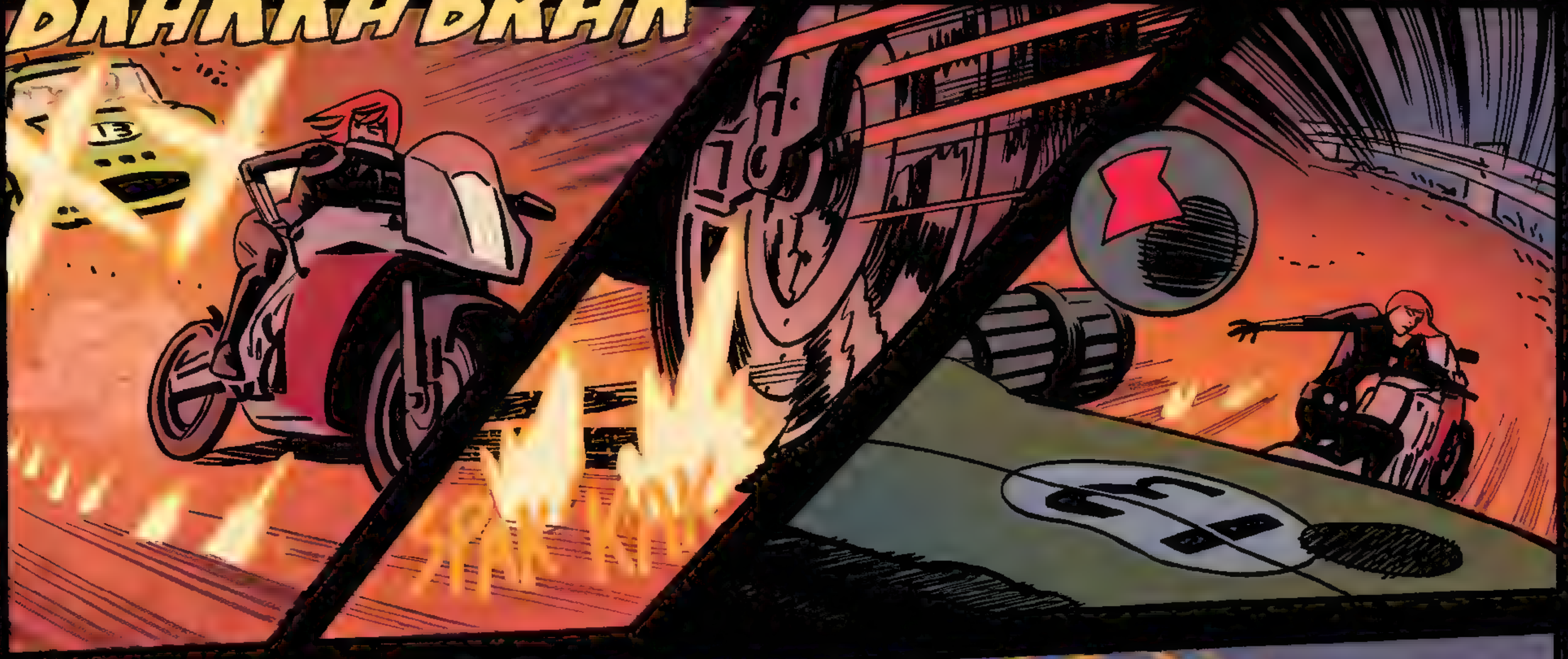


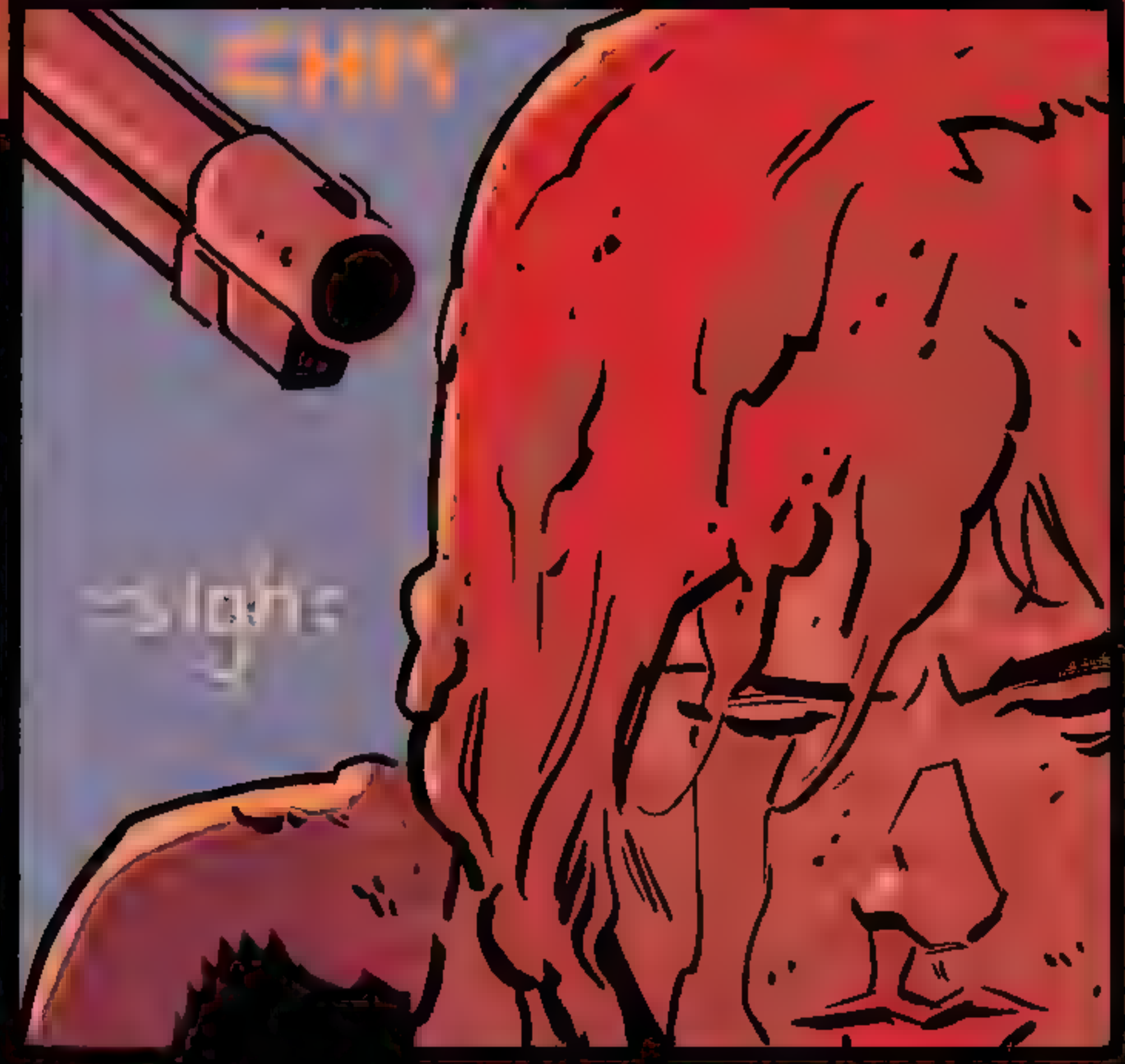
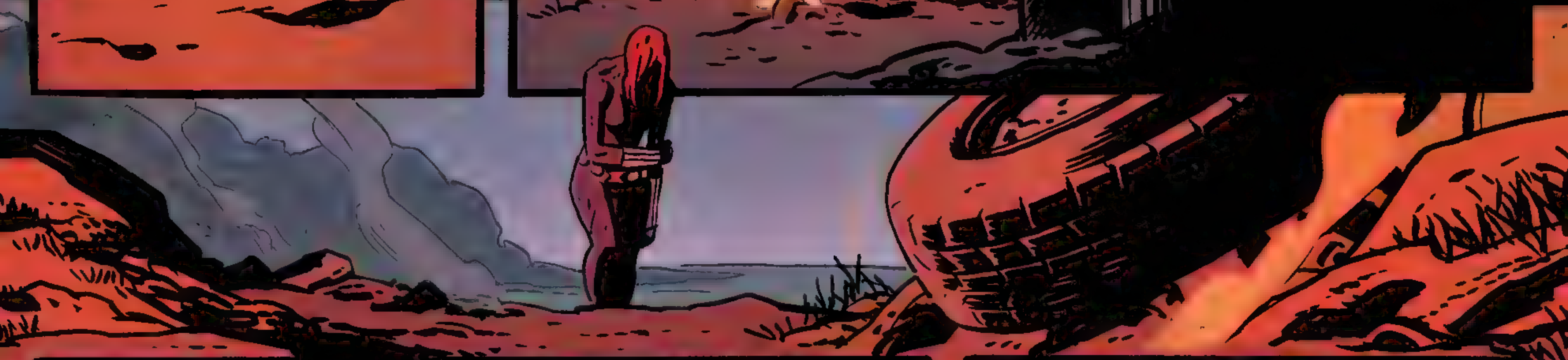
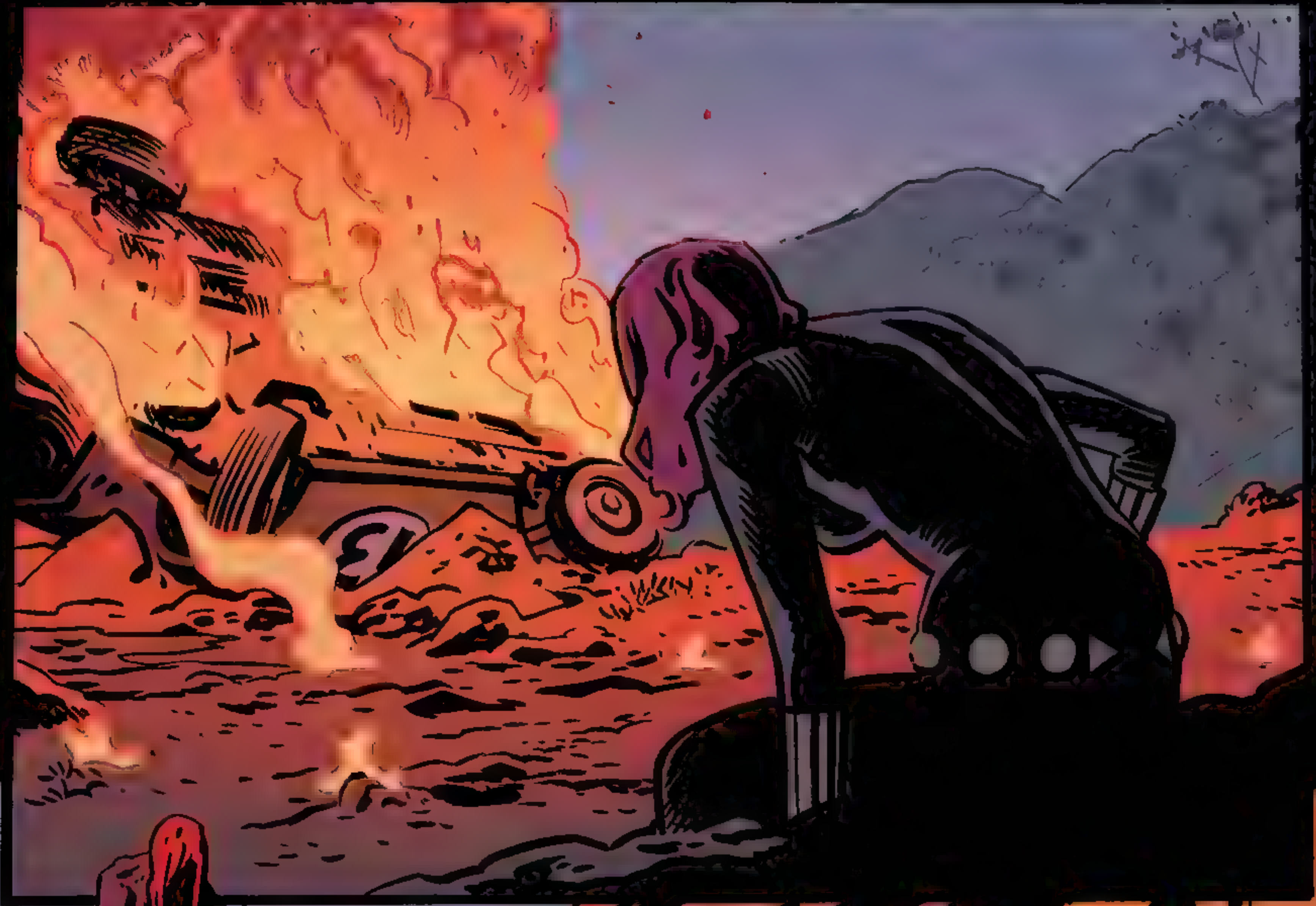


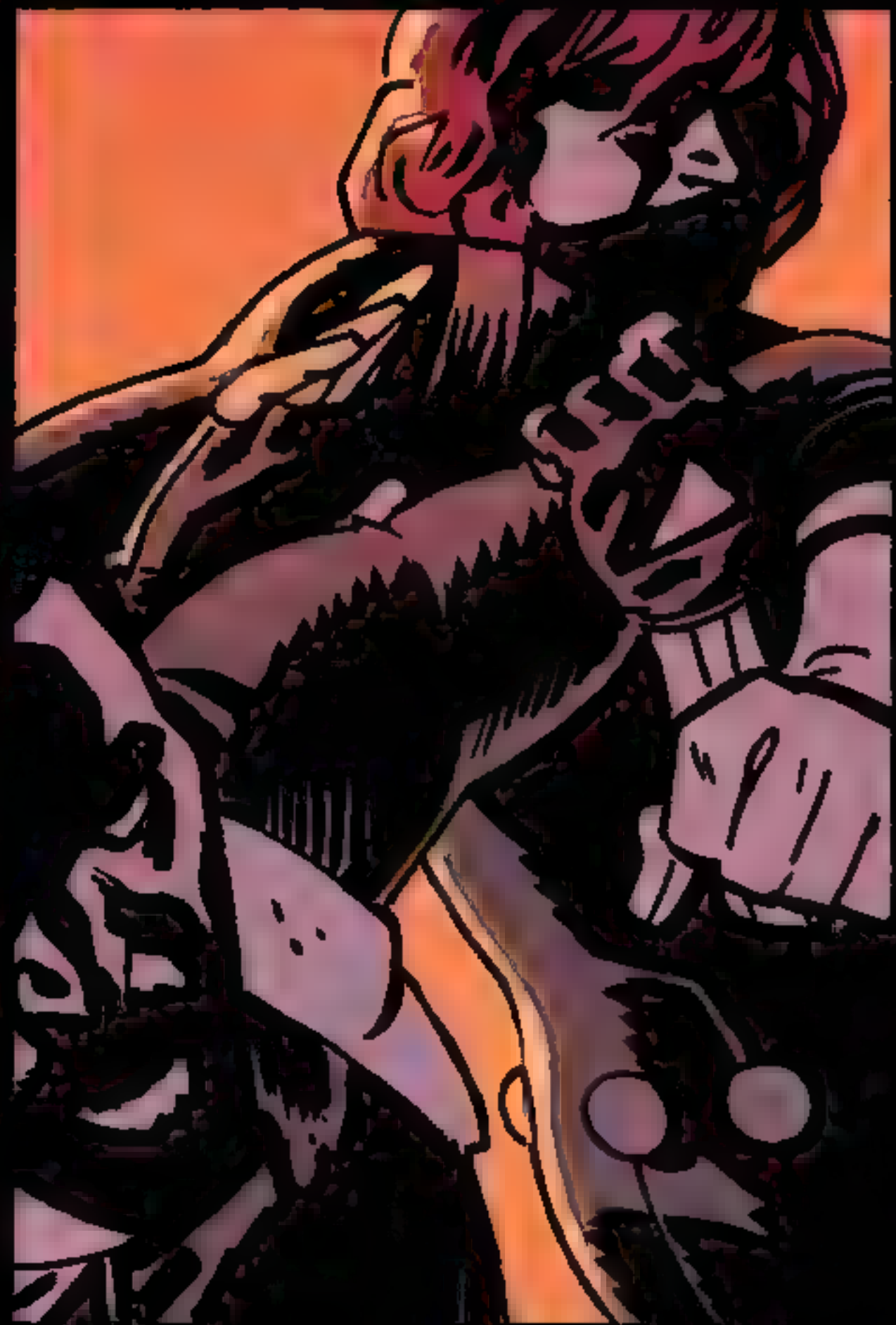
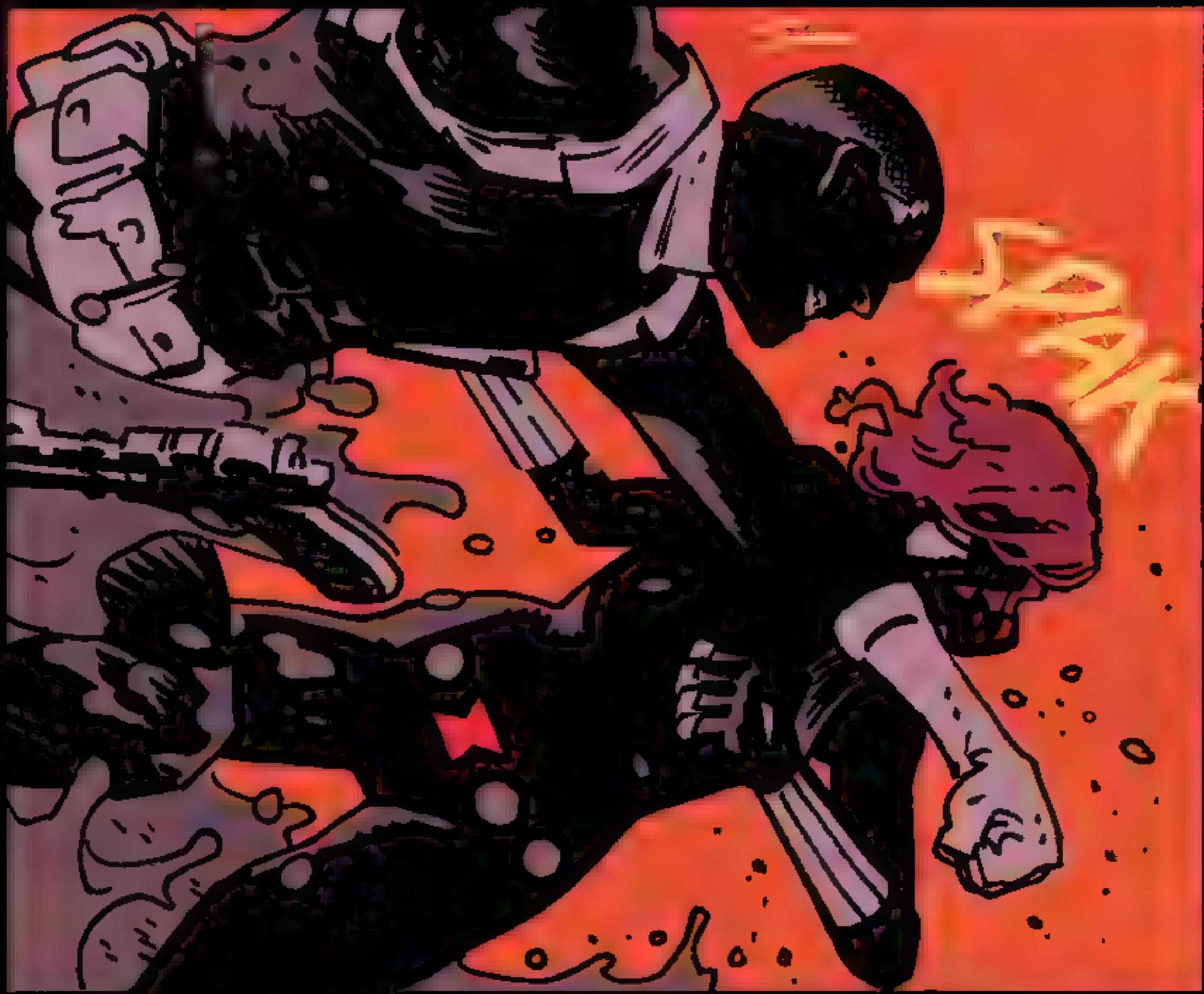


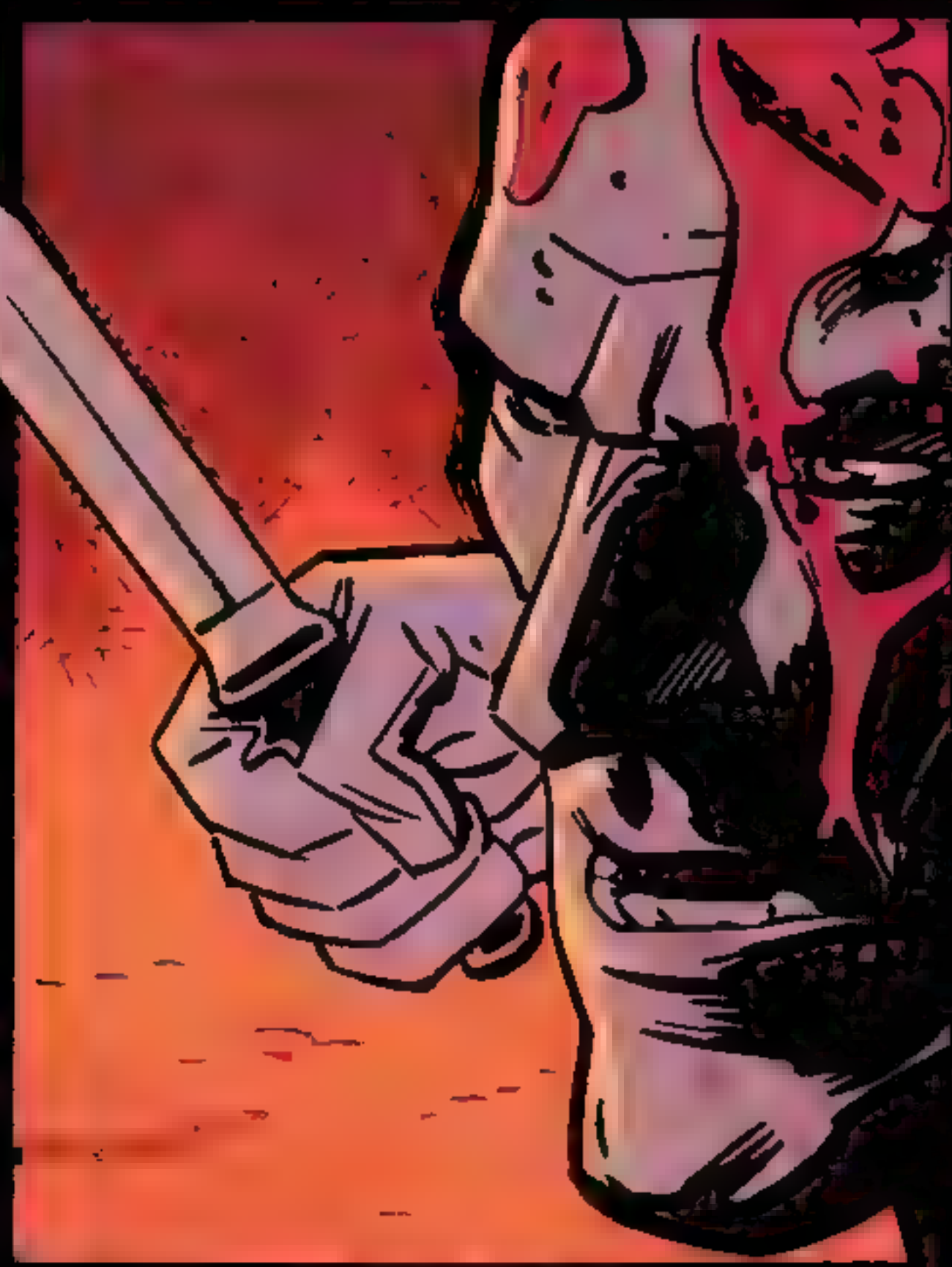
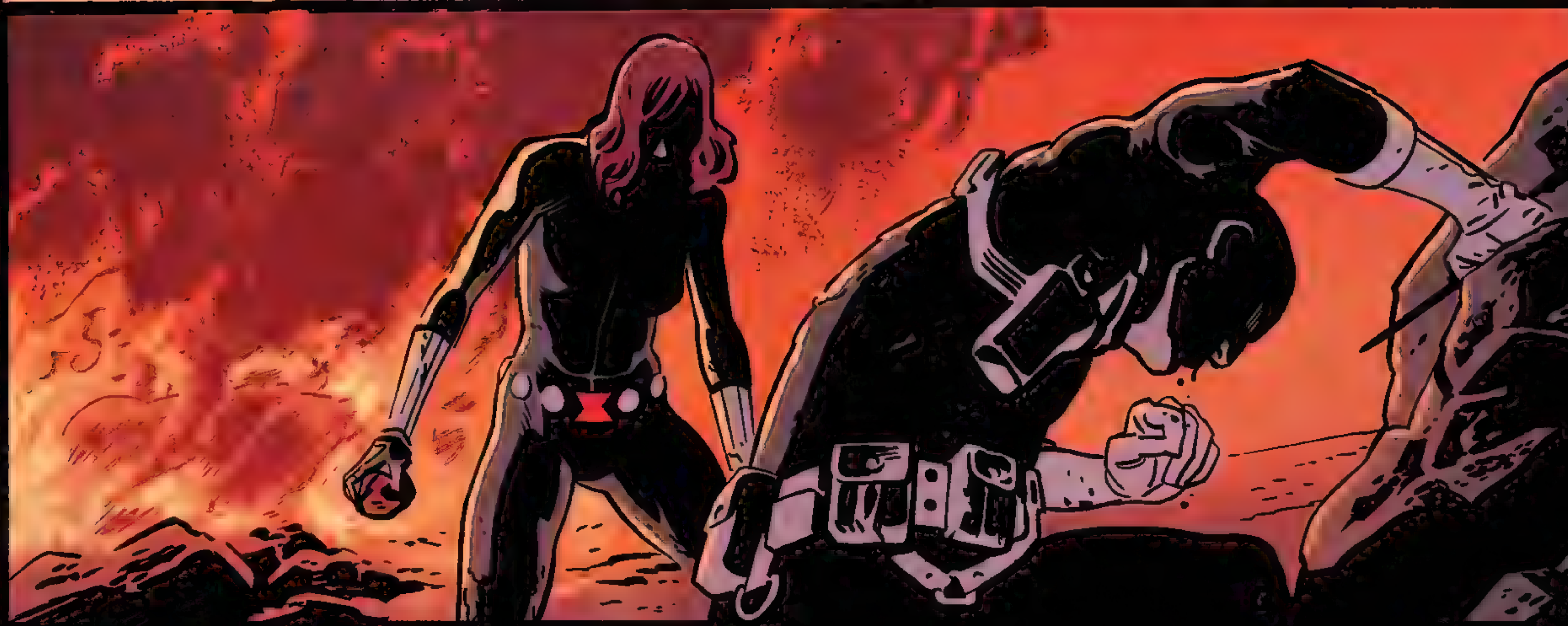


BRAKKA BRAK





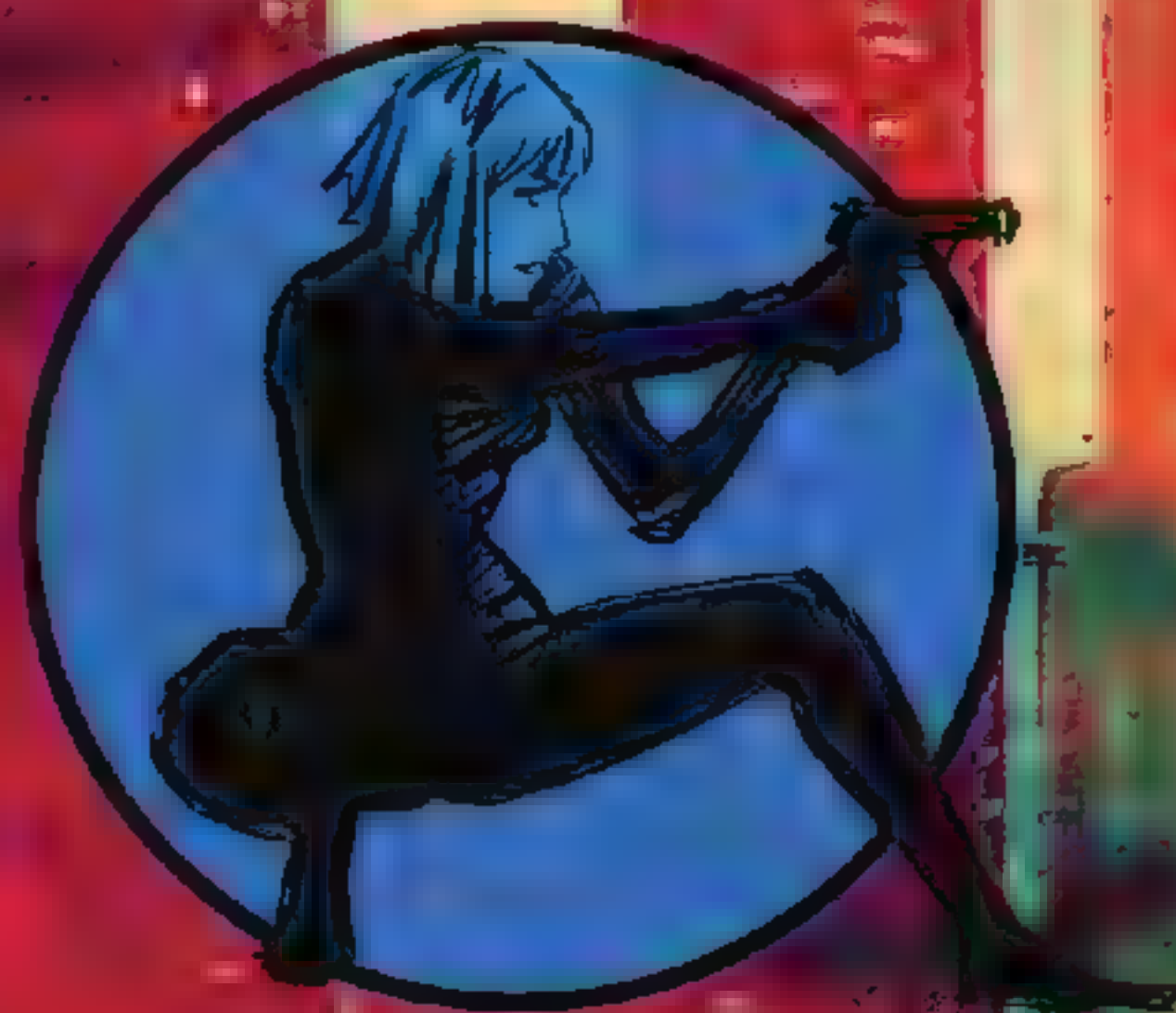




ME,
TOO.



DON'T
FALL
INTO
HER
WEB

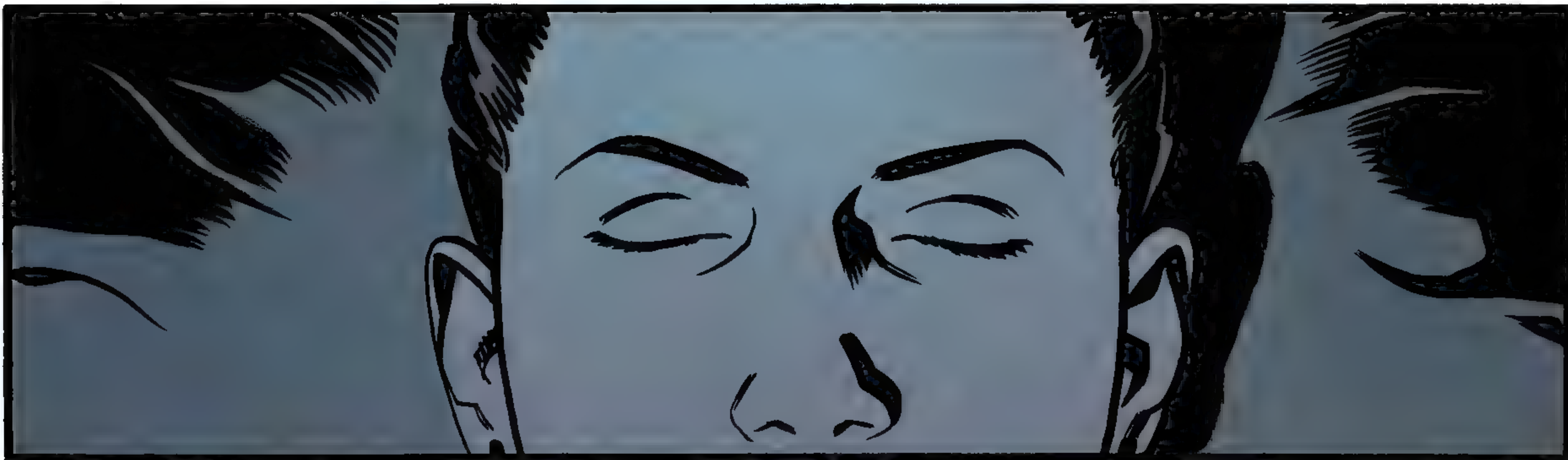


TULA LOTAY
NO. 1 VARIANT



SAMUEL'S
MW

ONE WEEK AGO...



I READ
TO YOU FROM THE
BOOK OF ISAIAH,
CHAPTER 57:

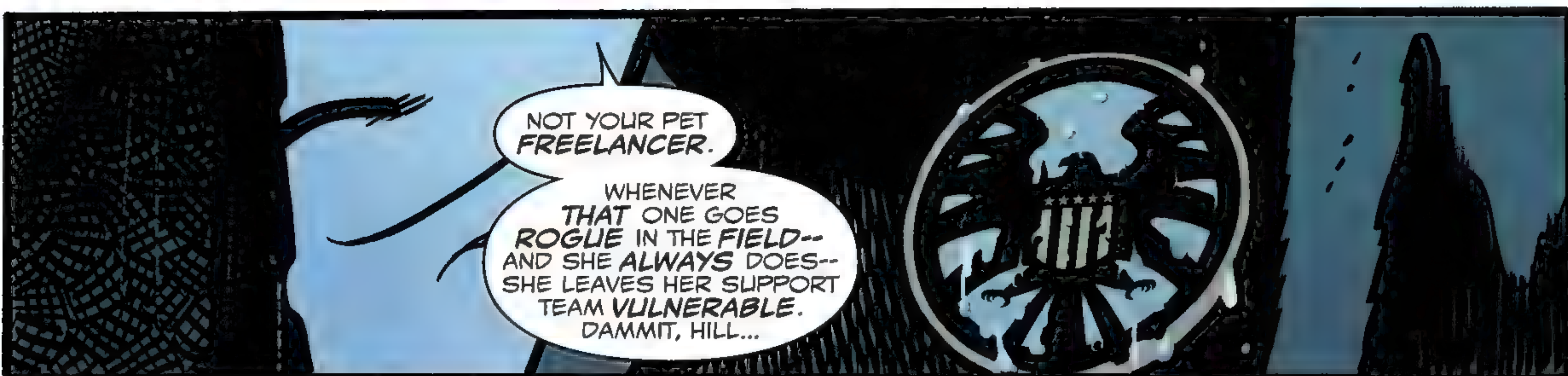
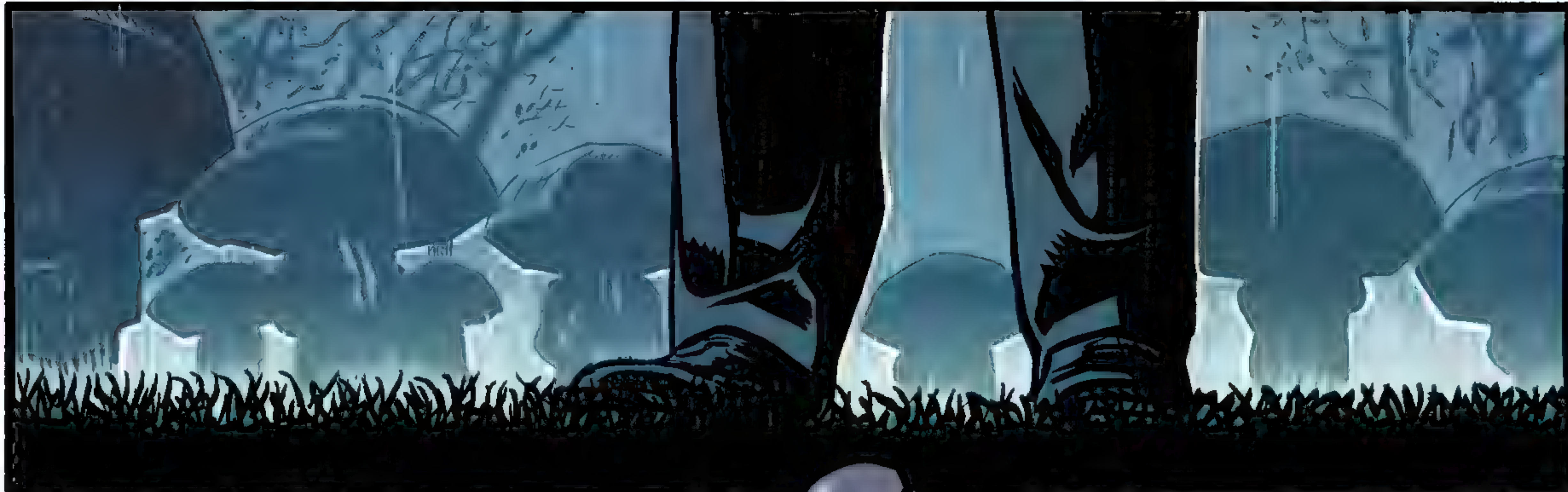


"NO ONE
UNDERSTANDS
THAT THE RIGHTEOUS
ARE TAKEN AWAY
TO BE SPARED
FROM EVIL."



"THOSE WHO
WALK UPRIGHTLY
ENTER INTO PEACE;
THEY FIND REST
AS THEY LIE
IN DEATH."

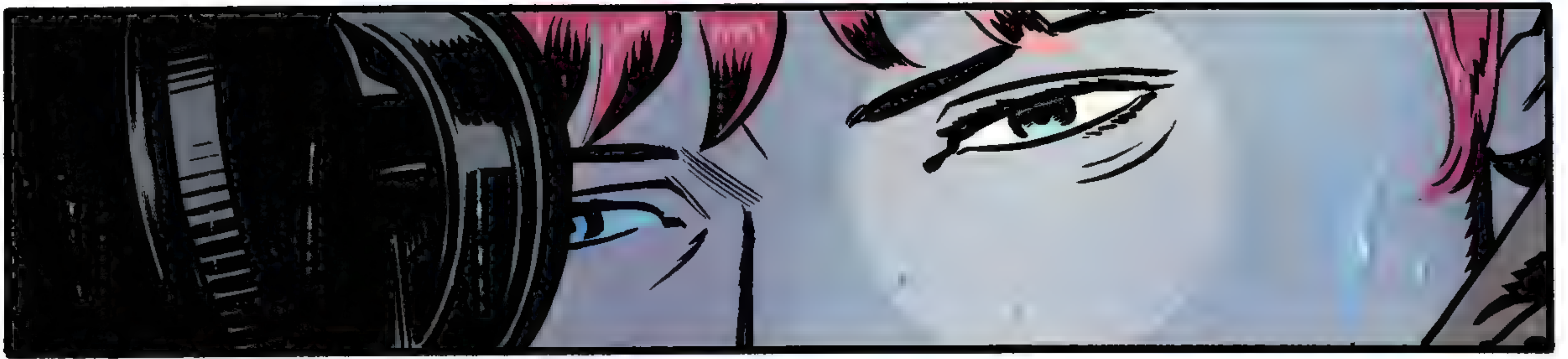




"...HOW MANY
MORE S.H.I.E.L.D.
AGENTS ARE
GOING TO DIE--

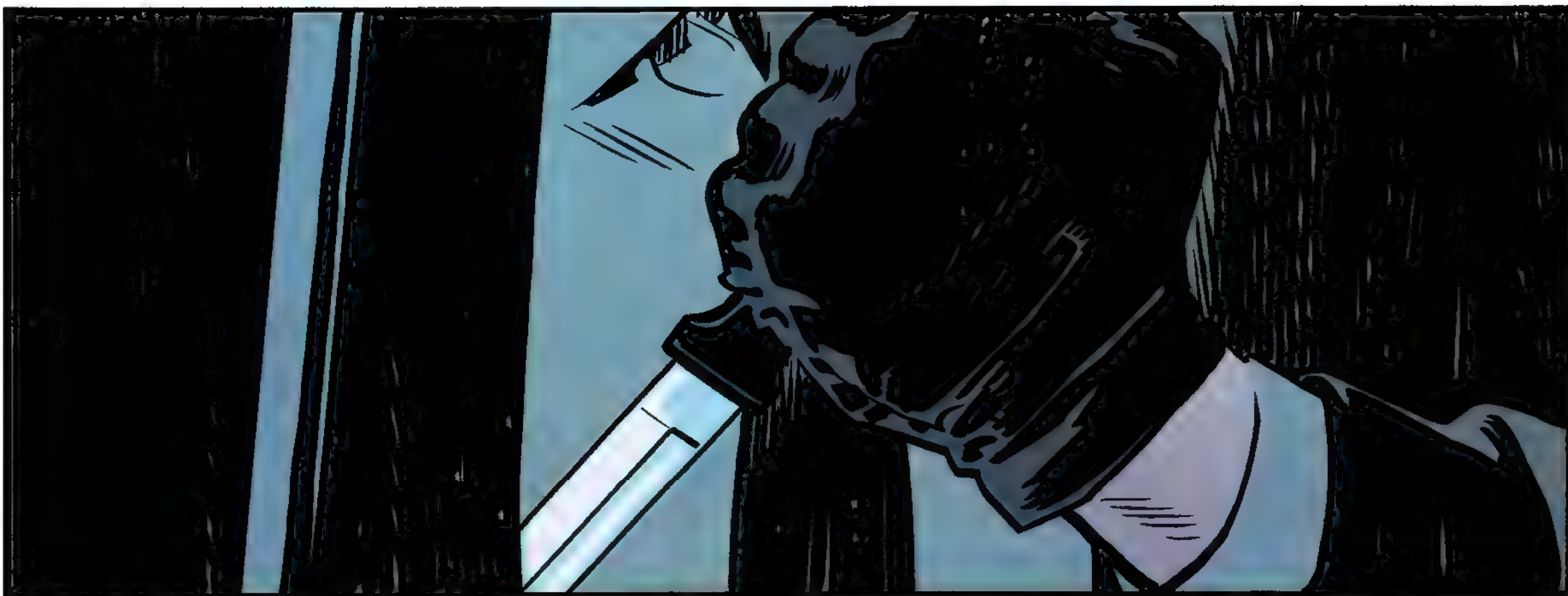
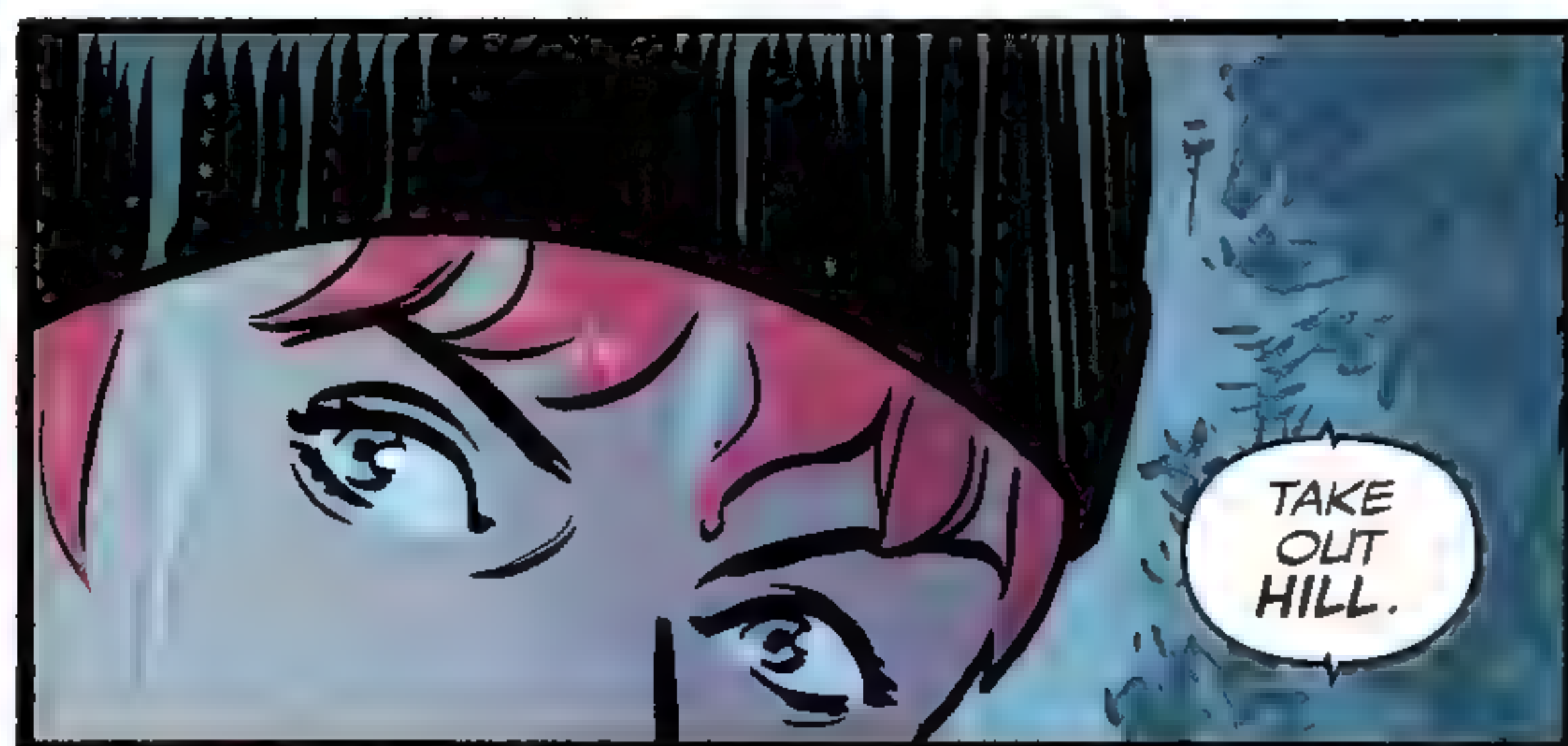
"--THANKS
TO THE **BLACK
WIDOW?**"

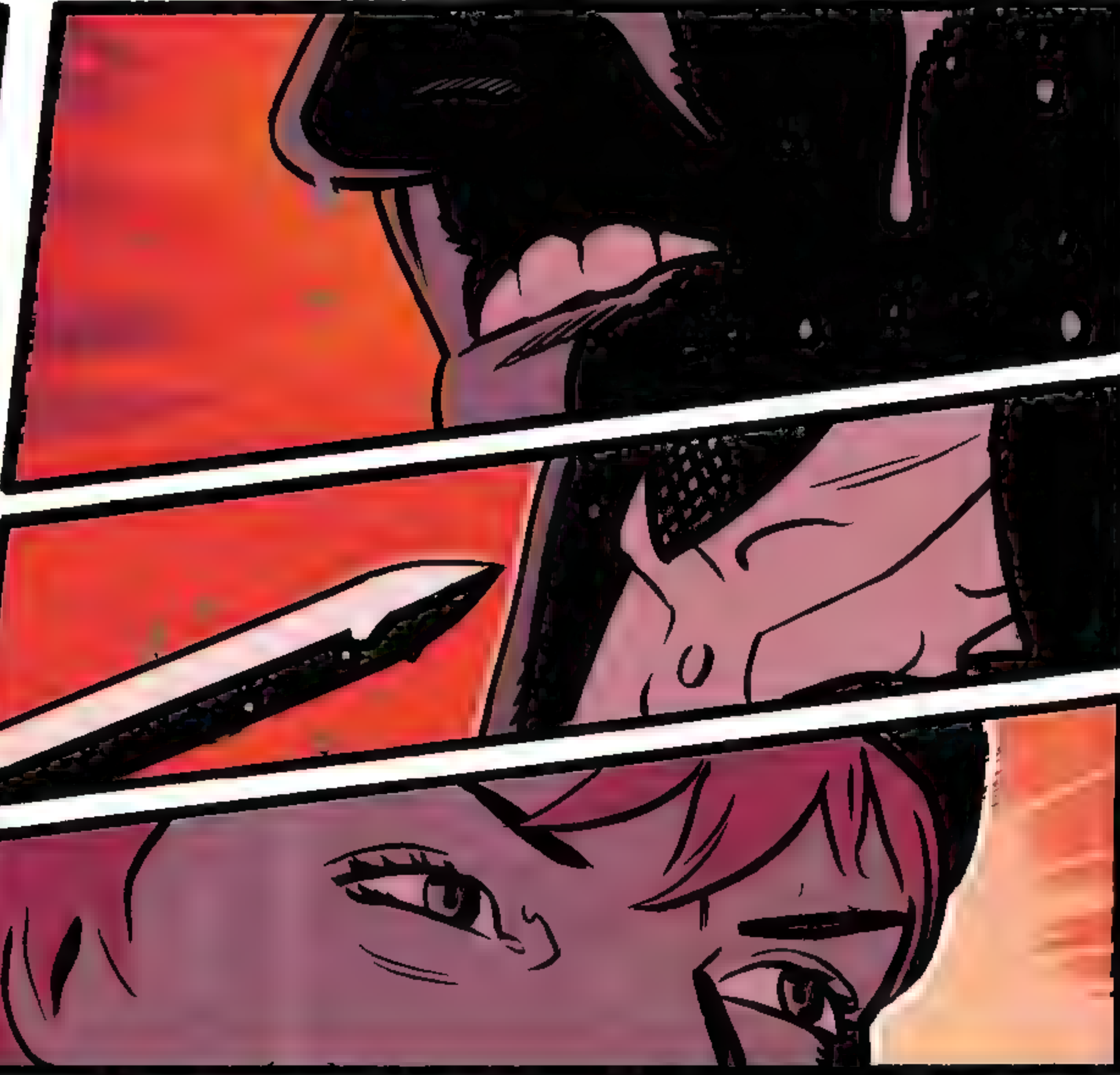
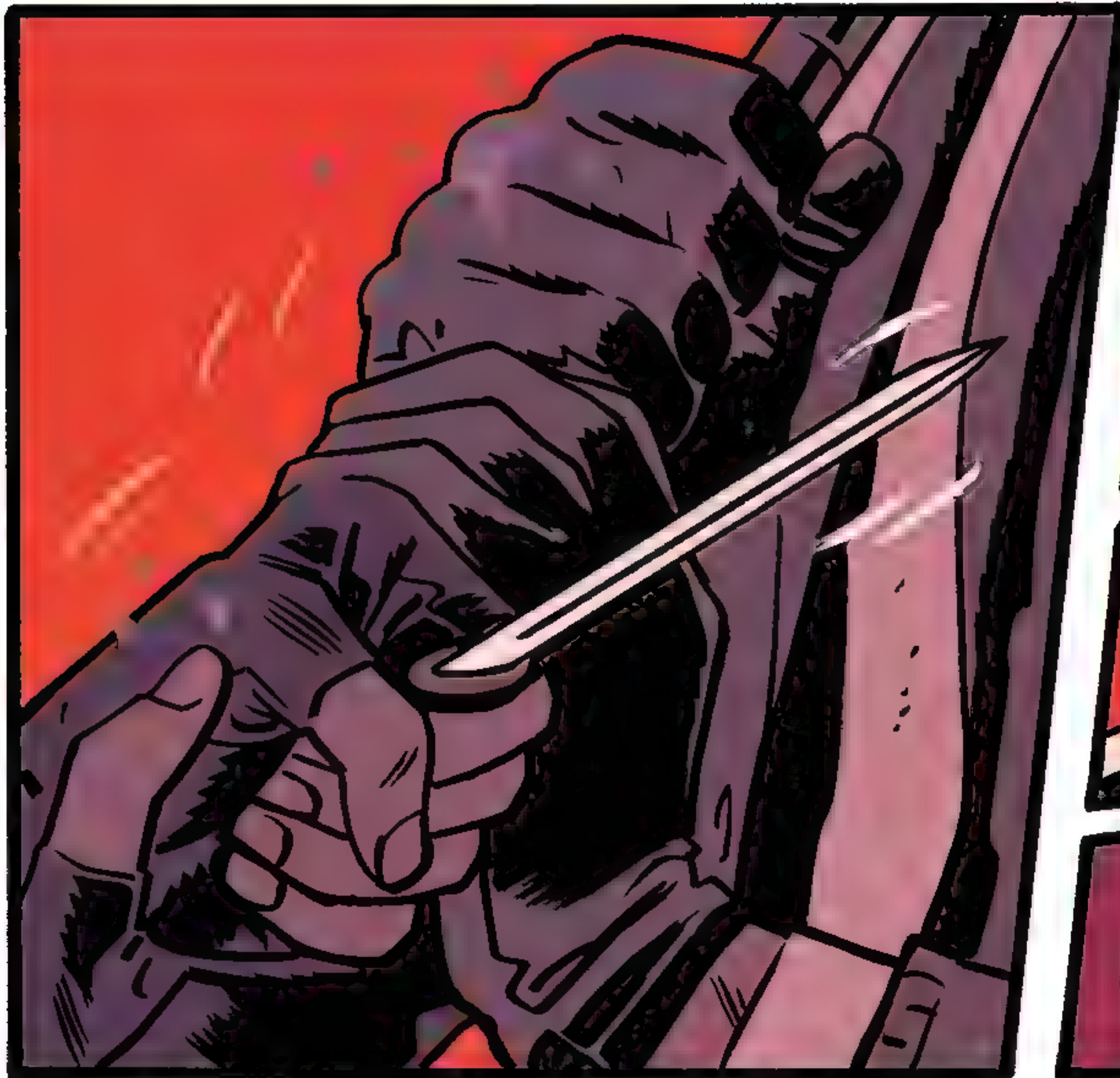


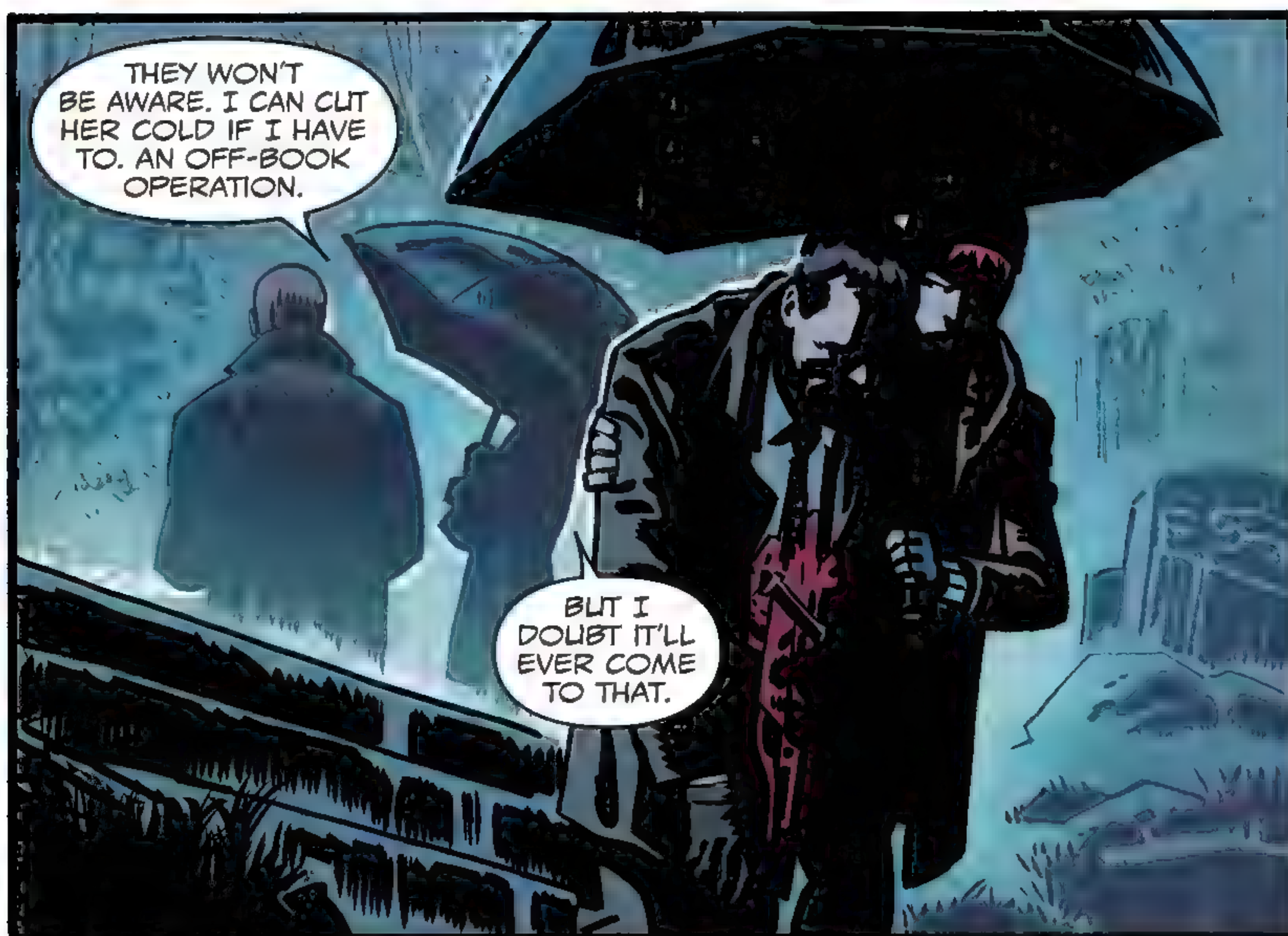


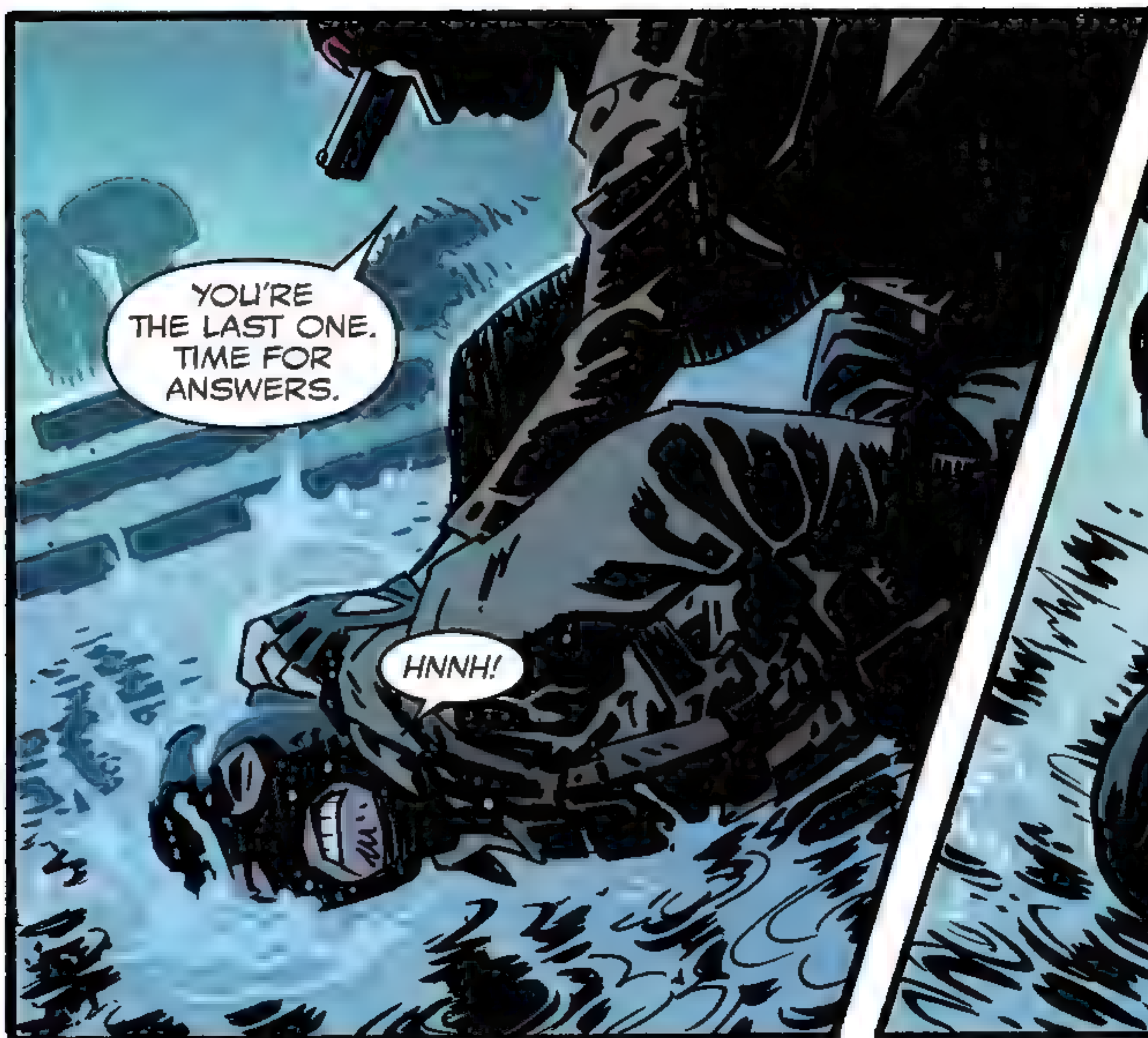












YOU'RE
THE LAST ONE.
TIME FOR
ANSWERS.

HNNH!



WHO SENT
YOU? HOW
DID HE EVEN
KNOW OF THIS
PLACE?



THERE ARE
NO SECRETS
FROM PLATCH
LIEV, WIDOW.

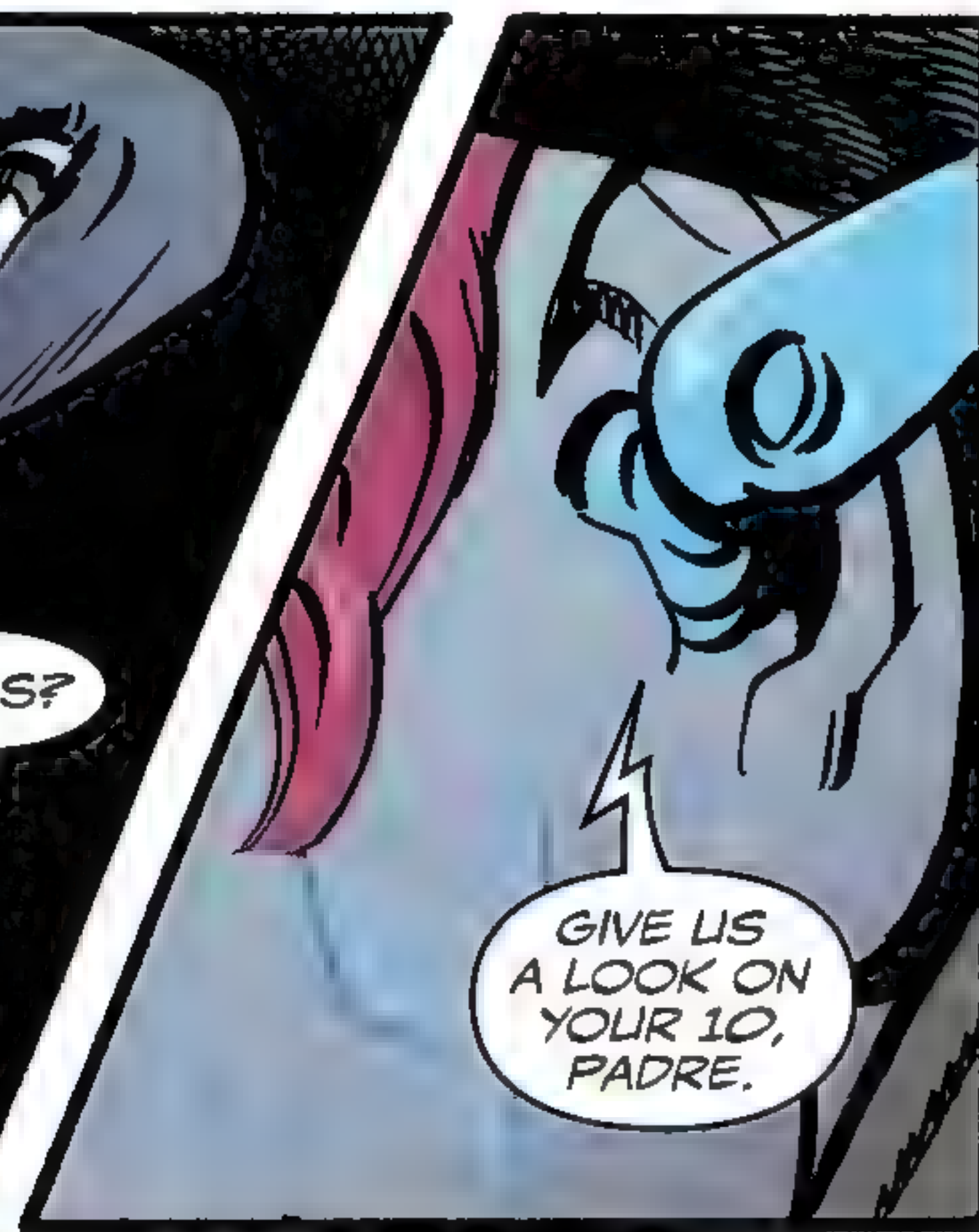
NO WAY
TO HIDE ONCE
THE **WEEPING
LION** LOCKS ONTO
HIS PREY. HE NEVER
FAILS IN HIS
OBJECTIVE.



WELL, HE
HAS NOW.
I'VE TAKEN
OUT YOUR
**ENTIRE
CREW.**



BOSS?



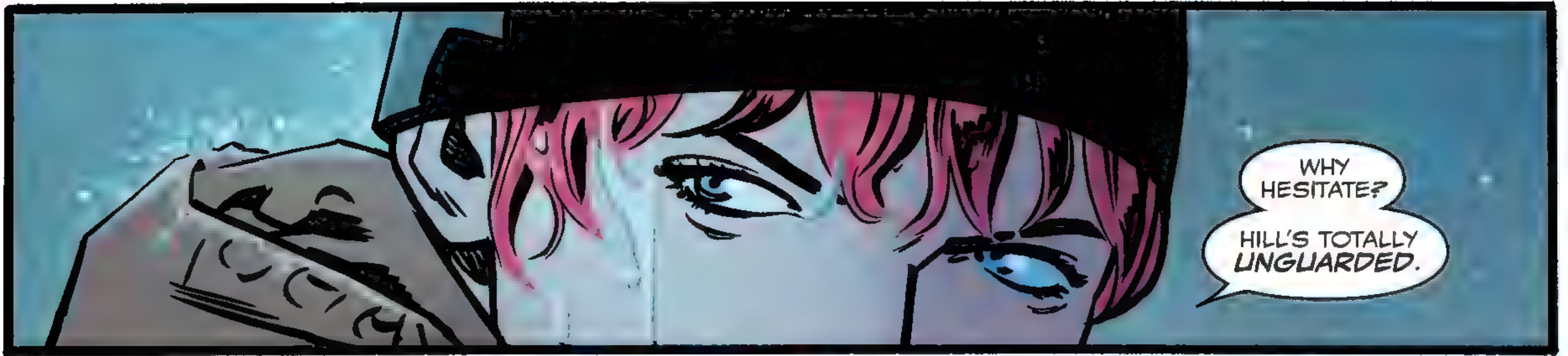
GIVE US
A LOOK ON
YOUR **10,**
PADRE.

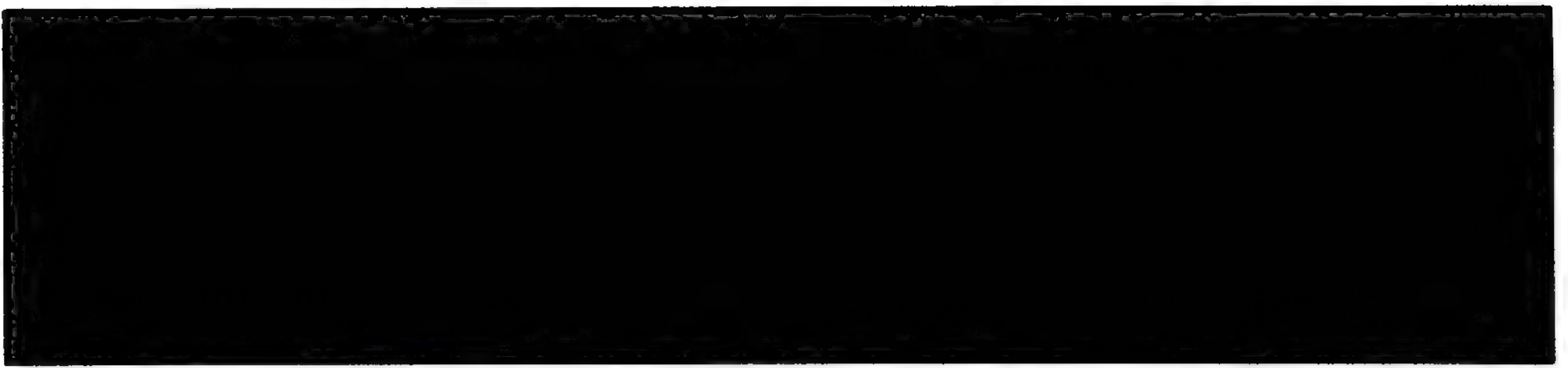


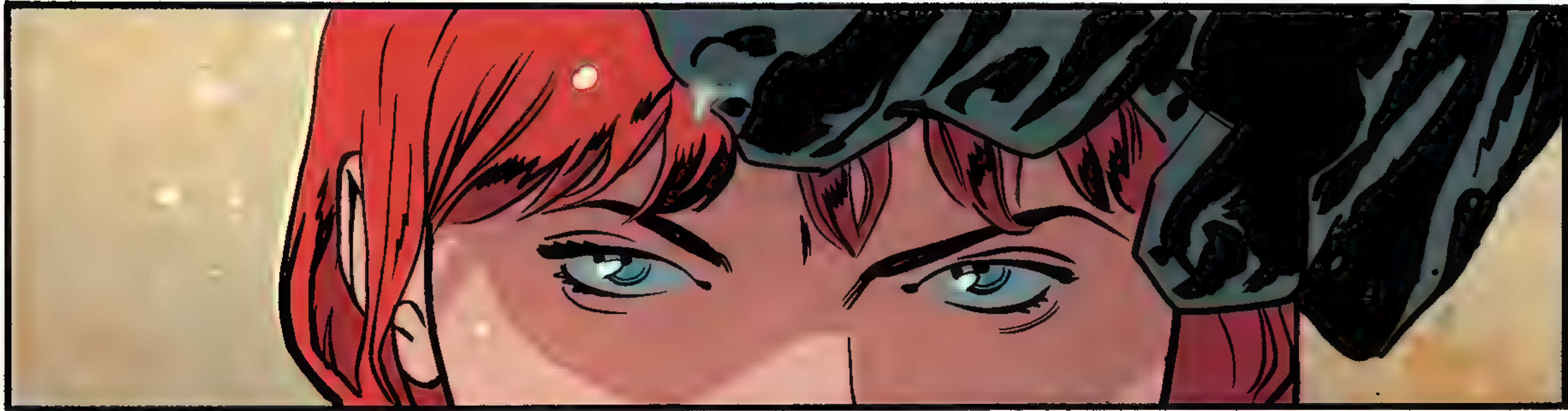
ALSO ONE
OF OURS. AND
HE HAS MORE
AROUND HIM THAN
A **COLLAR,**
WIDOW.

IN FACT,
IT'S A MIRACLE
HE CAN EVEN
STAND WITH SO
MUCH C4 UNDER
THAT ROBE.

STAY SILENT
AND STAND
DOWN OR THIS
ENTIRE CEMETERY
BECOMES A
CRATER.



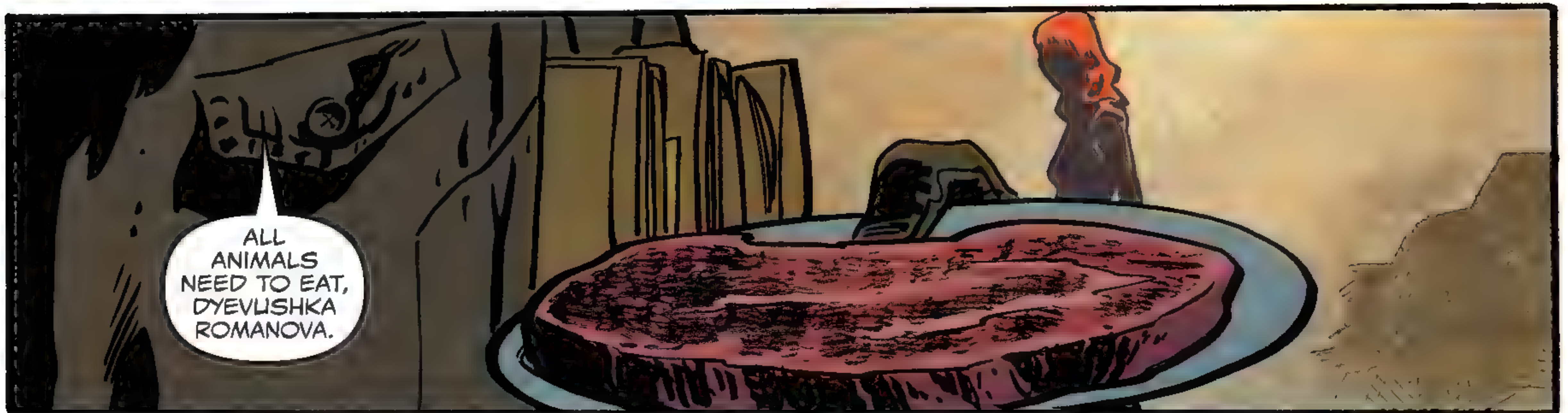










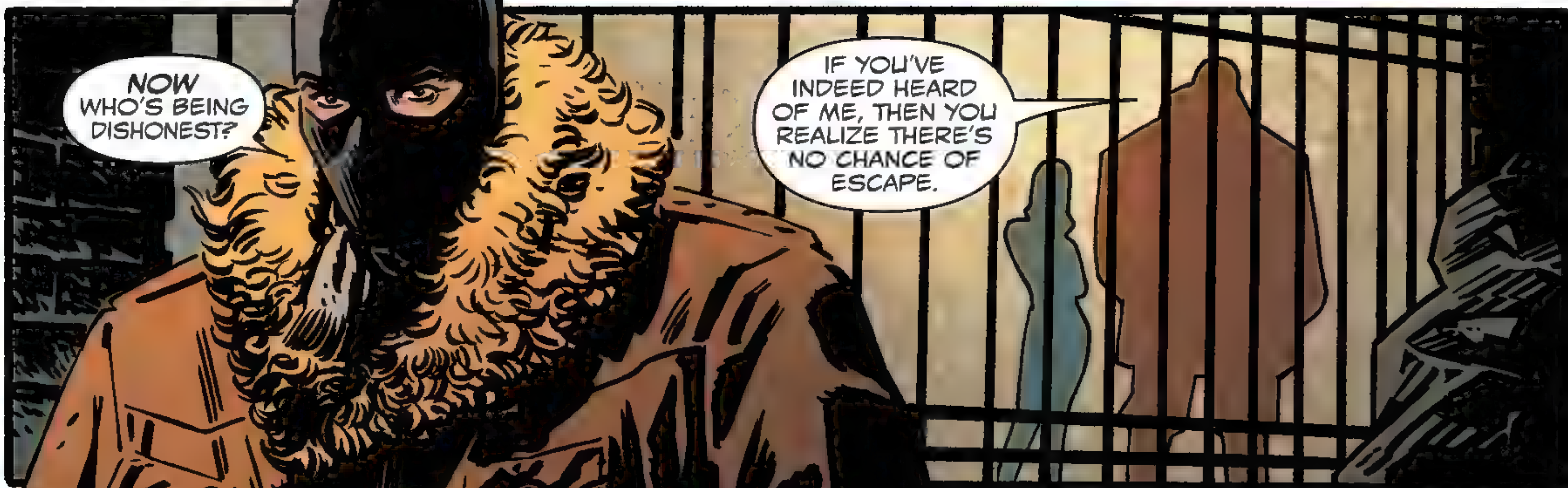




DON'T LIE
TO YOURSELF,
PLATCH LIEV.

"WEeping
LION." I'VE
HEARD YOUR
NAME.

I'M NO
CAPTIVE.
YOU'VE NO
HOLD ON
ME.



NOW
WHO'S BEING
DISHONEST?

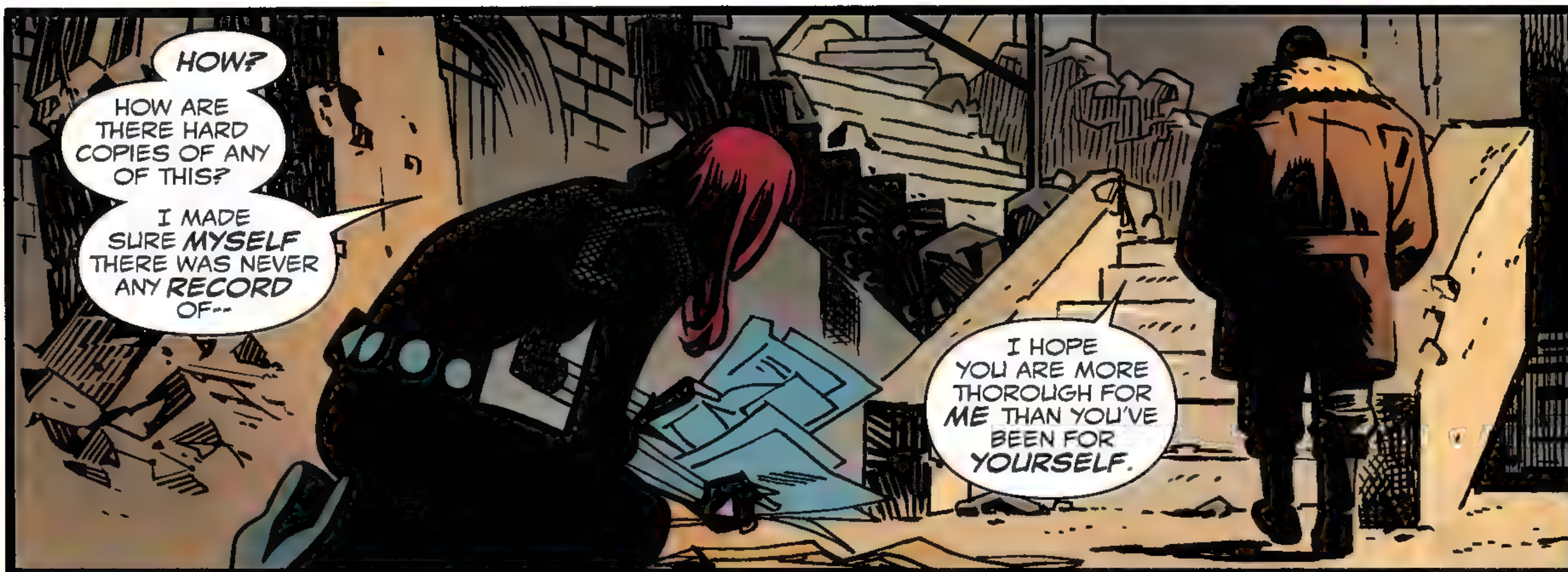
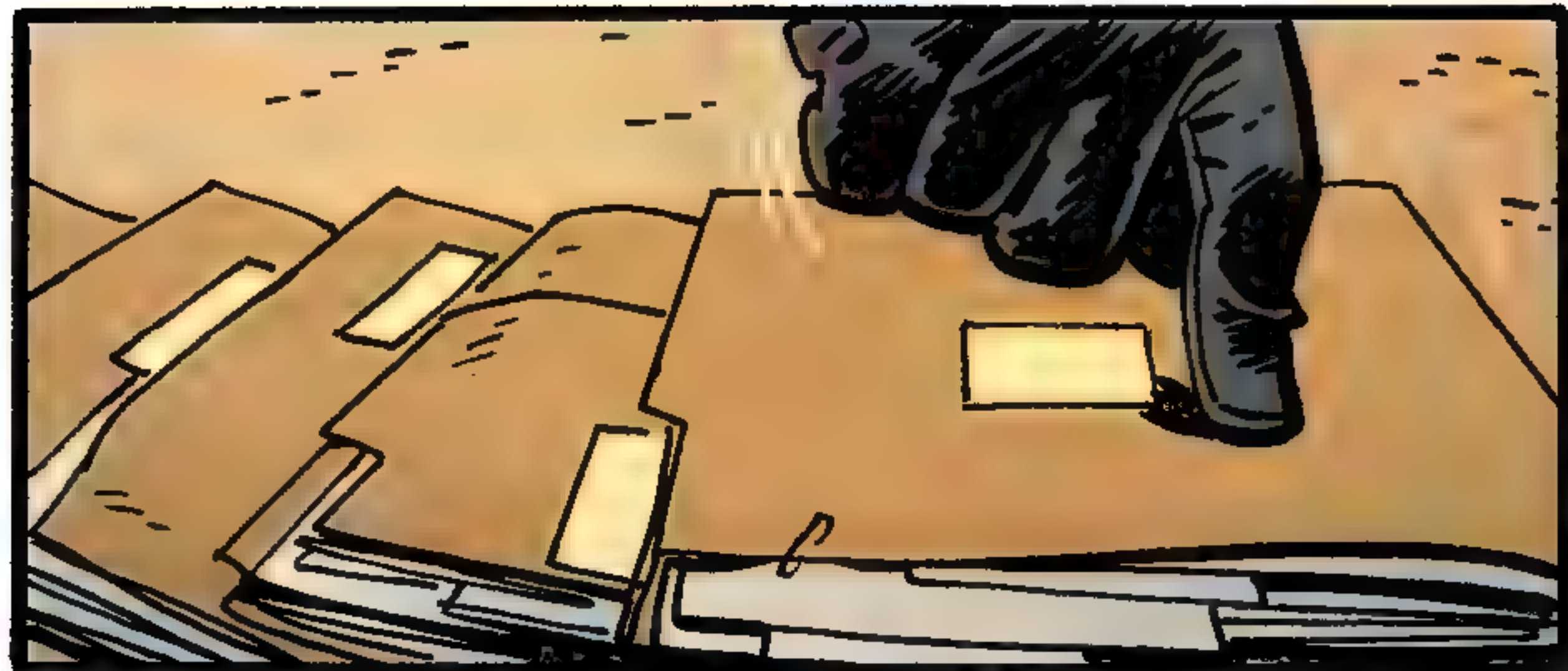
IF YOU'VE
INDEED HEARD
OF ME, THEN YOU
REALIZE THERE'S
NO CHANCE OF
ESCAPE.

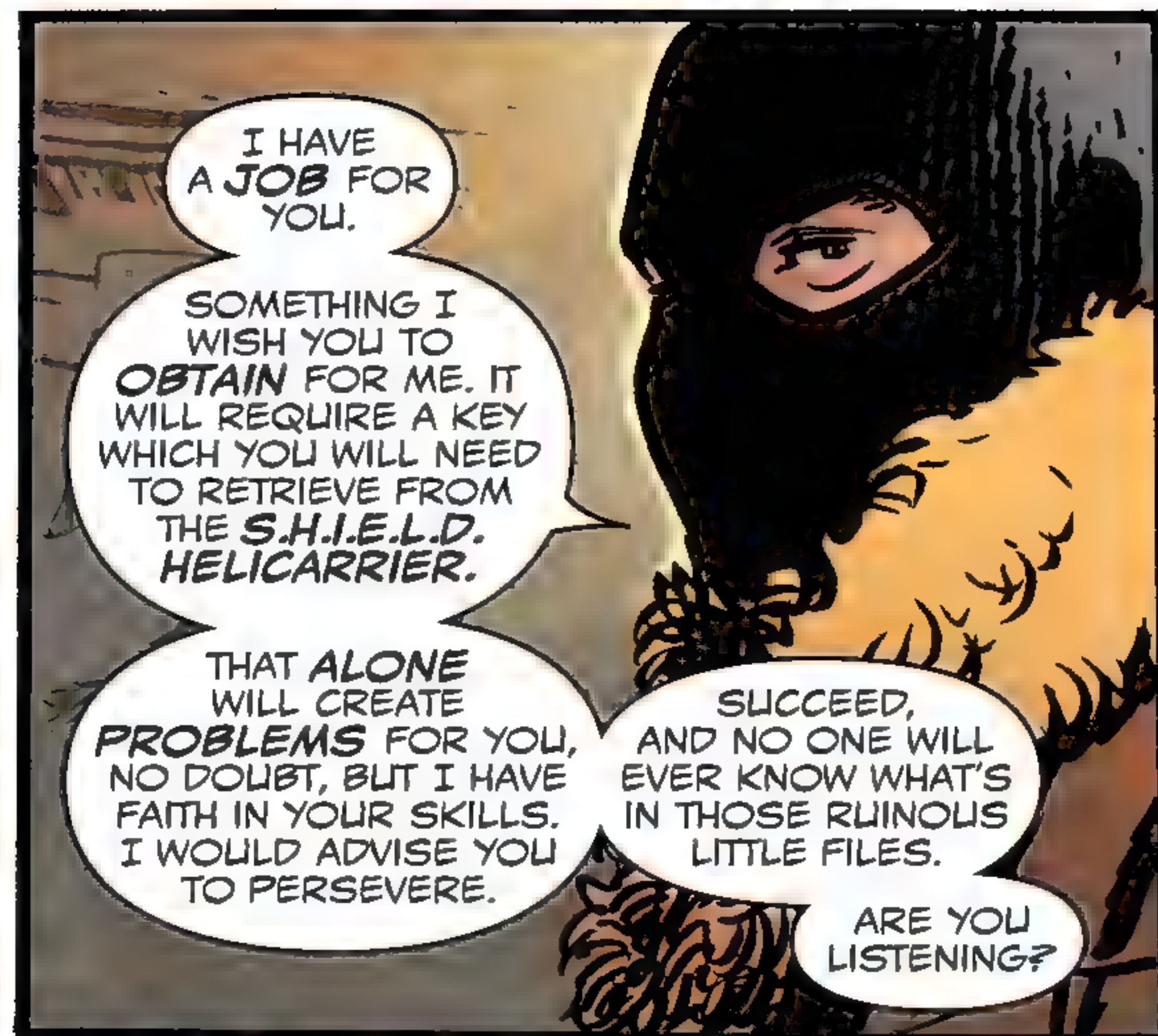


BOZHI MOI,
DYEVLISHKA...

...HAVE YOU
EVER GONE
THROUGH EVEN ONE
DAY TELLING
THE TRUTH?



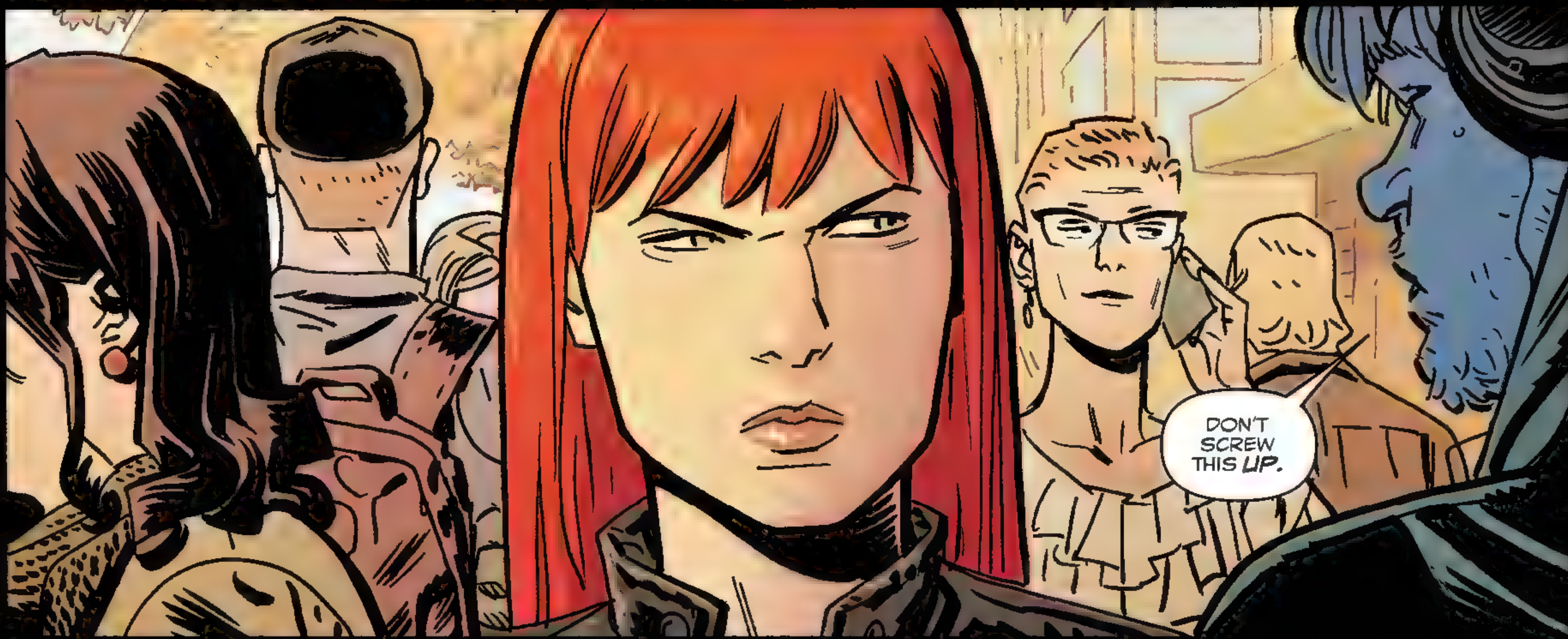


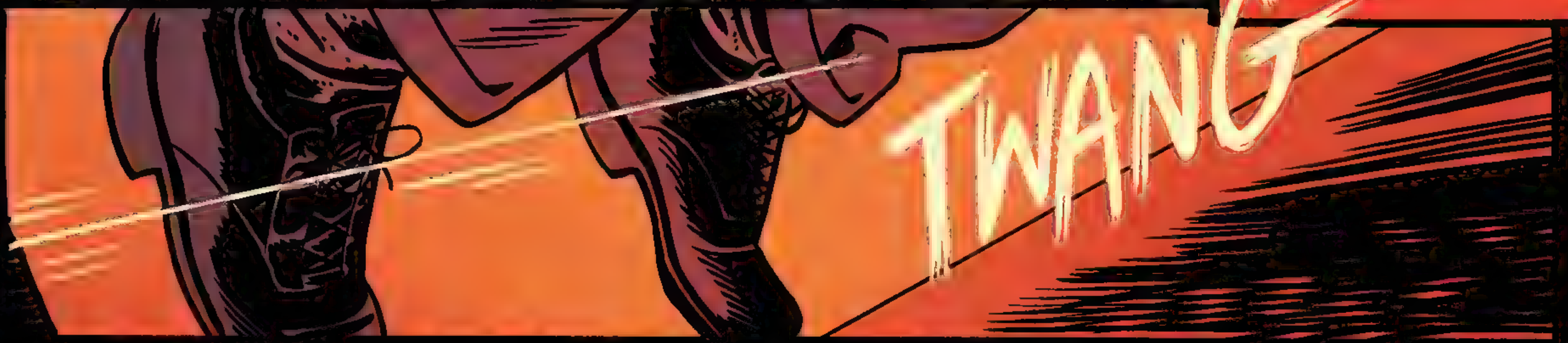


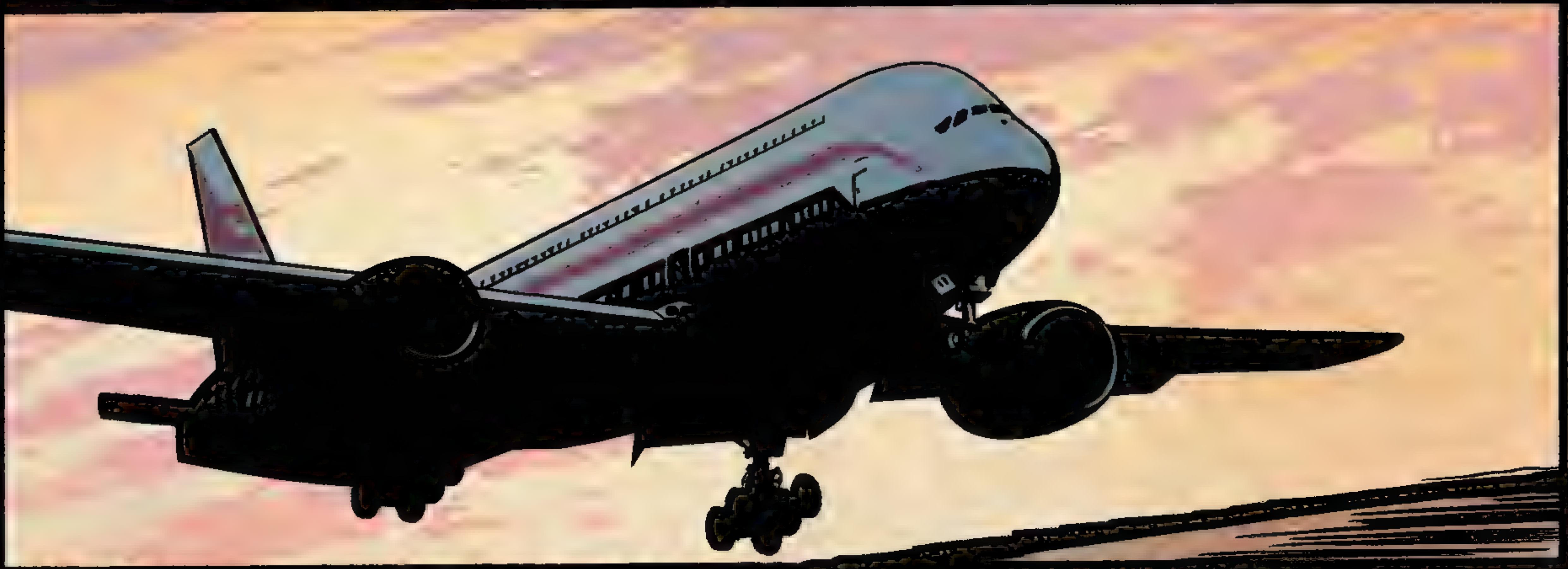
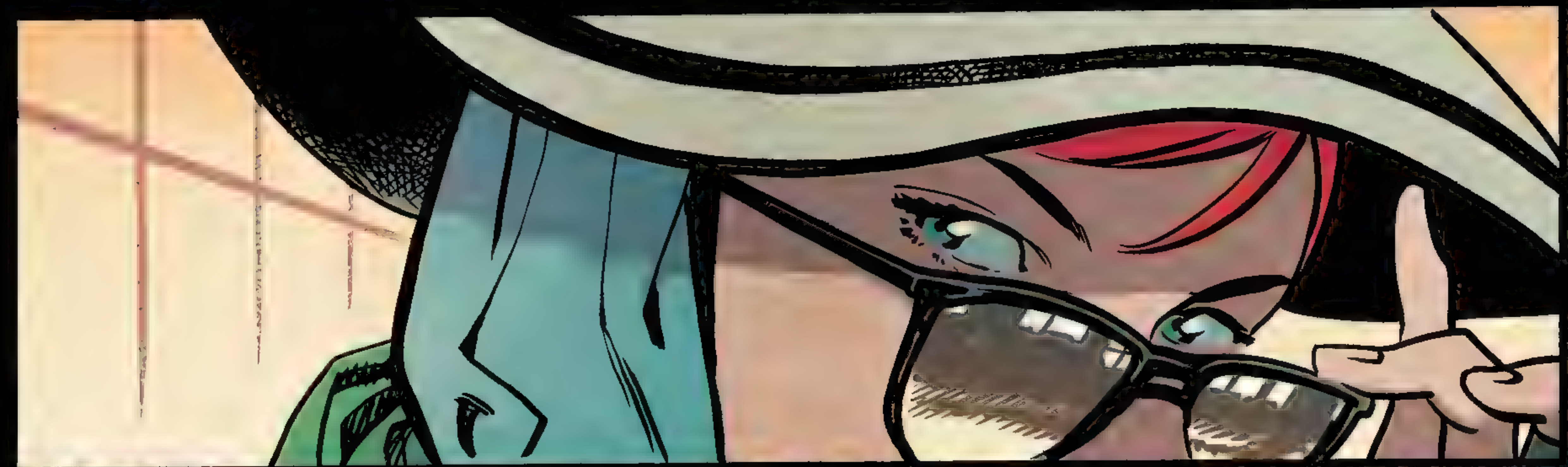


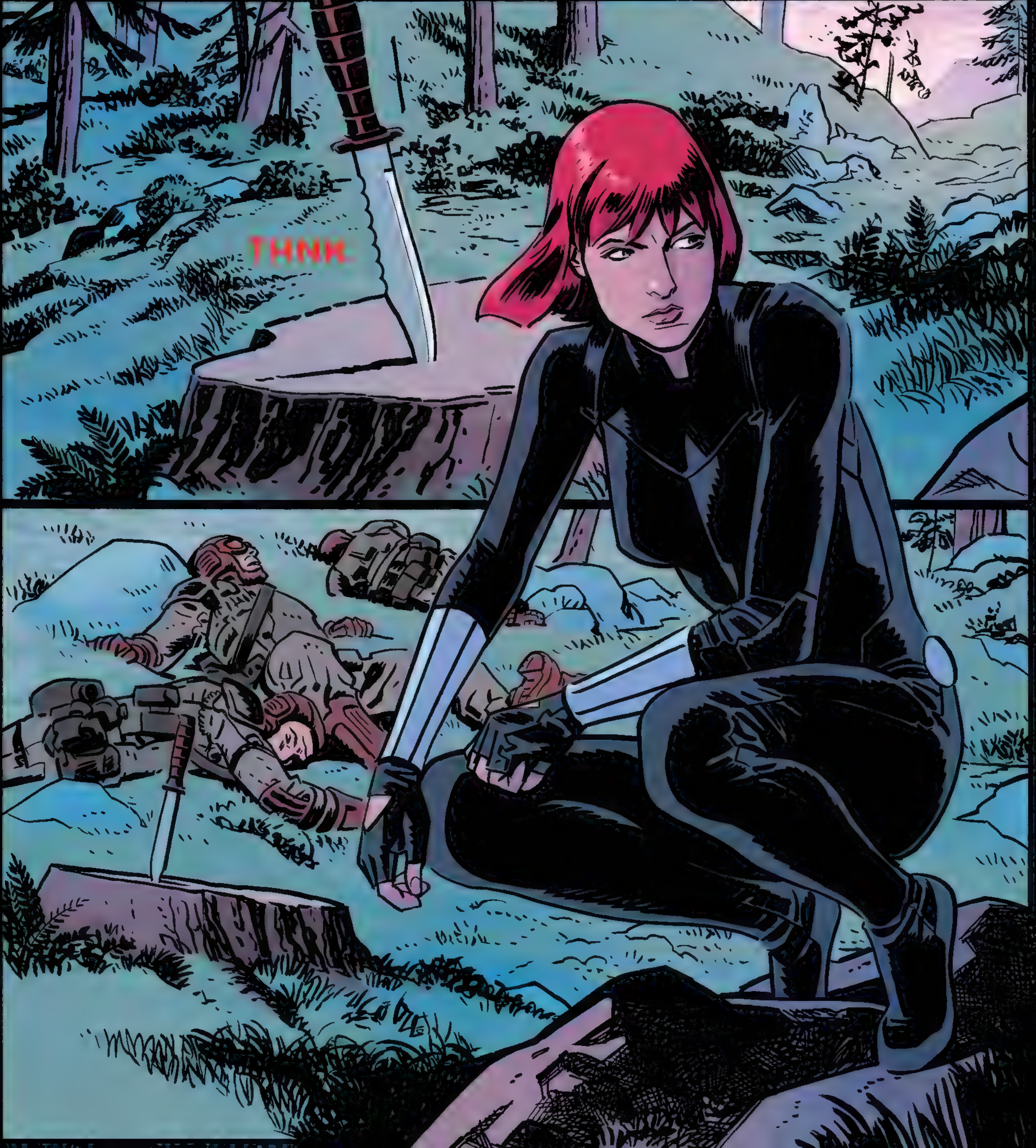
NEW YORK CITY.



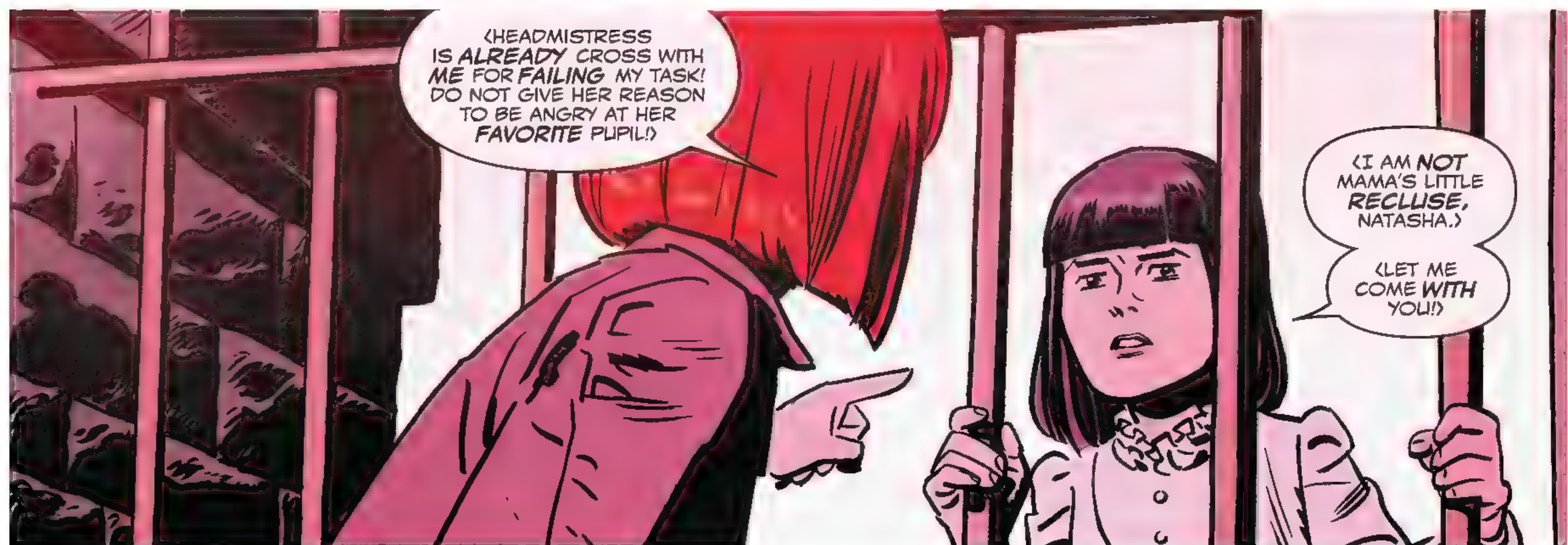
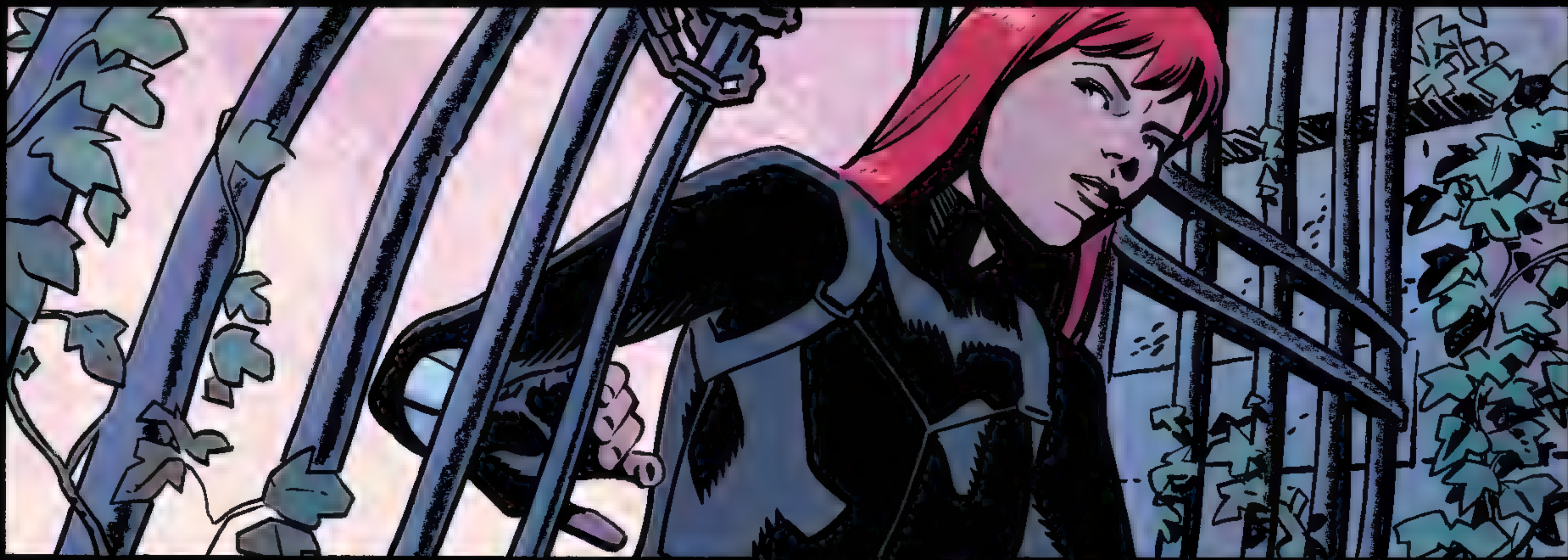








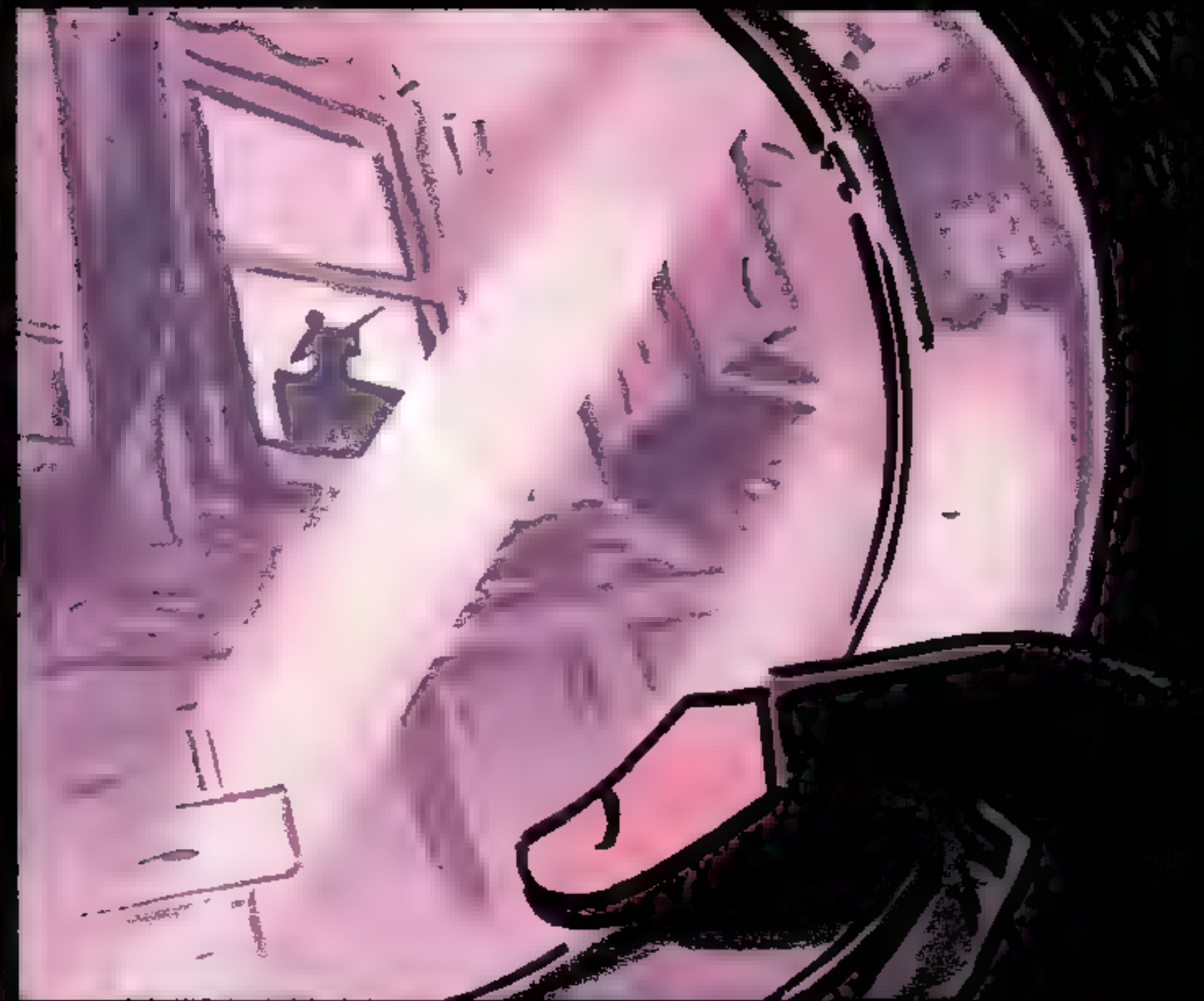
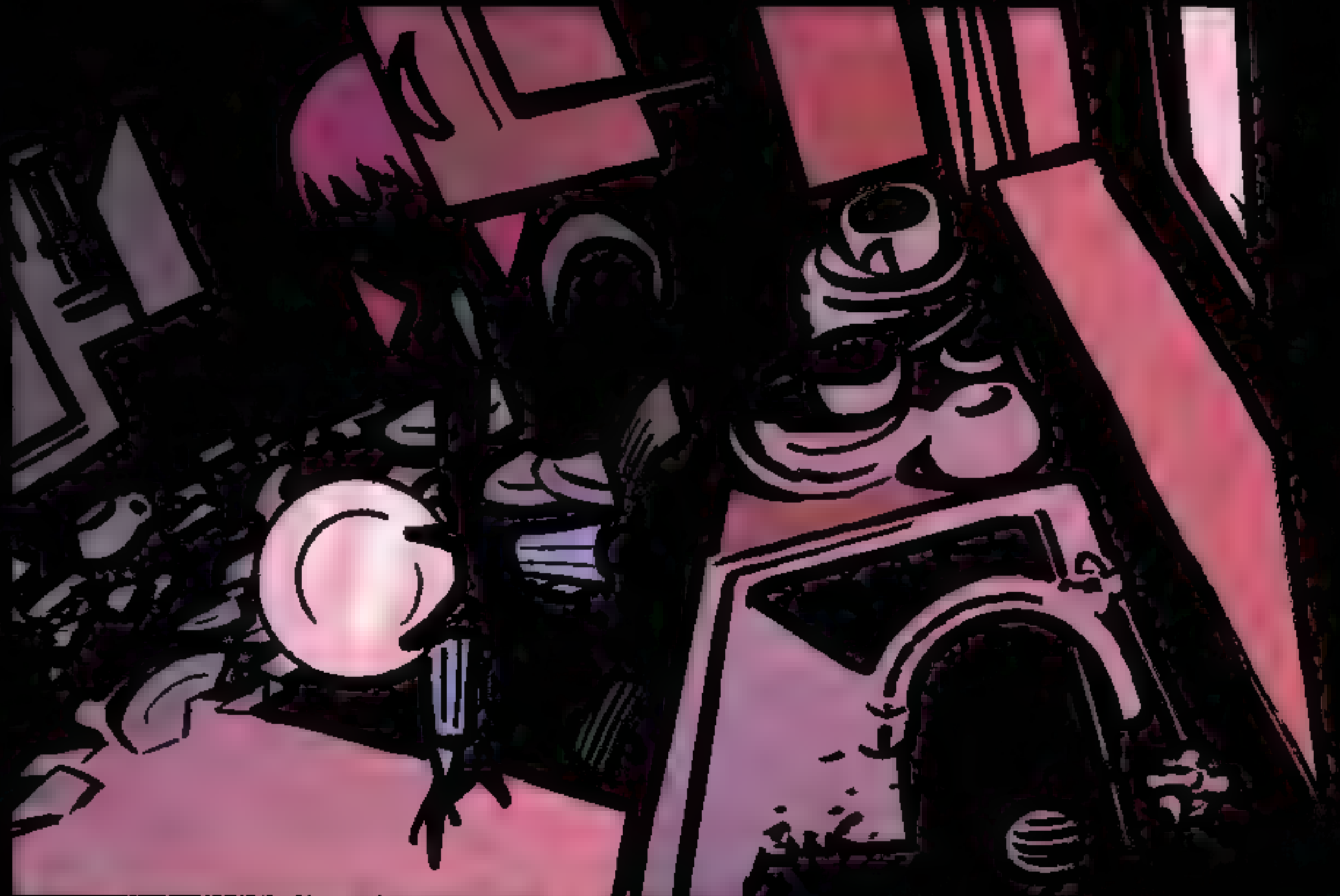








CHYORT!
(TWELVE
ROOMS DOWN,
AND WE'VE YET TO
FLUSH OUT SO MUCH
AS A LOST
BIRD.)



(THIS IS
A COLOSSAL
WASTE OF TIME,
COMRADE.)
(TO BELIEVE
THAT THIS "LION"
TRULY HAS SENT
SOMEONE TO SCAVENGE
THIS DUNGHEAP
SAYS LITTLE FOR HIS
ALLEGED
INTELLIGENCE.)

(WHAT IN
THIS DUMP
COULD POSSIBLY
BE WORTH
RETRIEVING?)



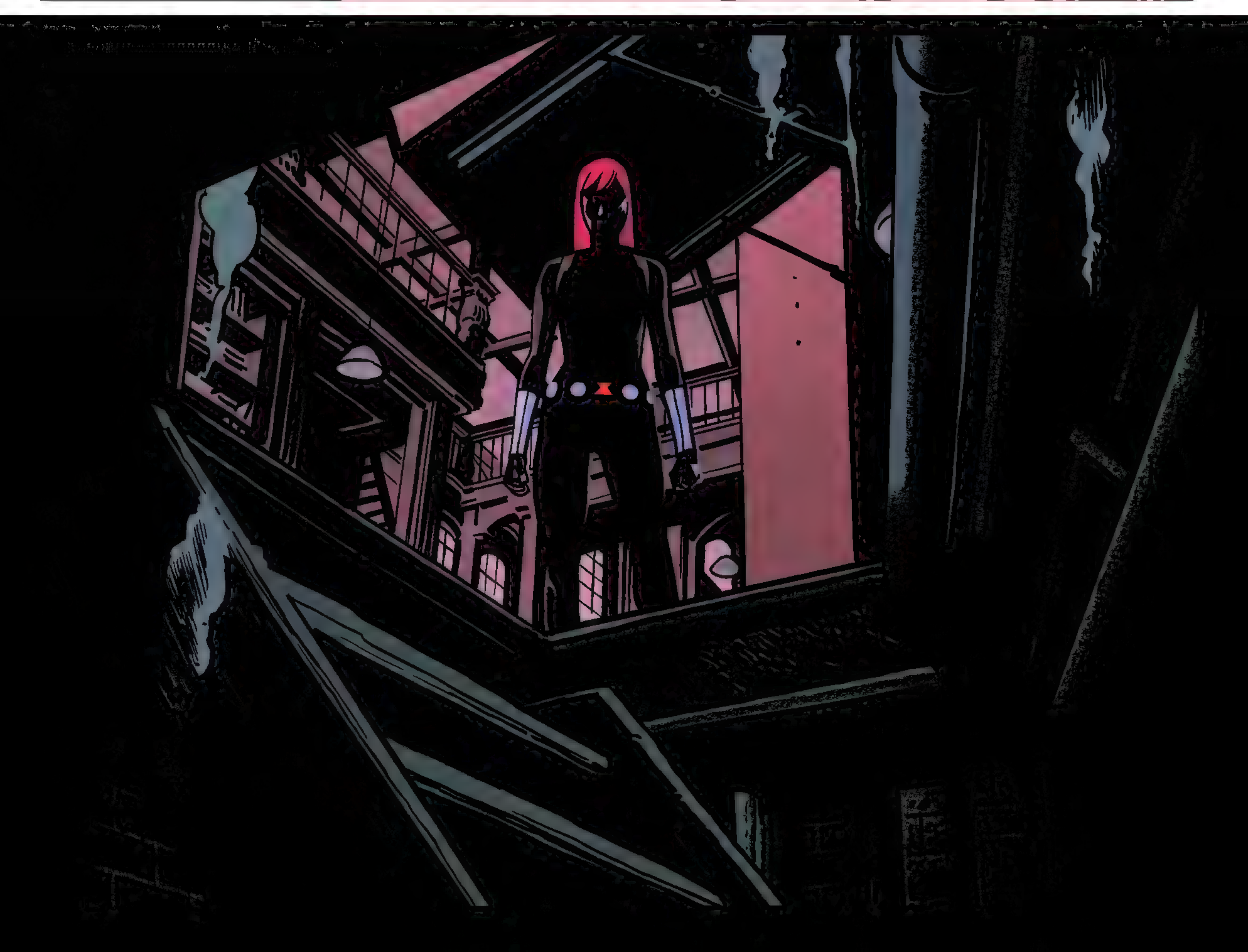
(WHO--?)

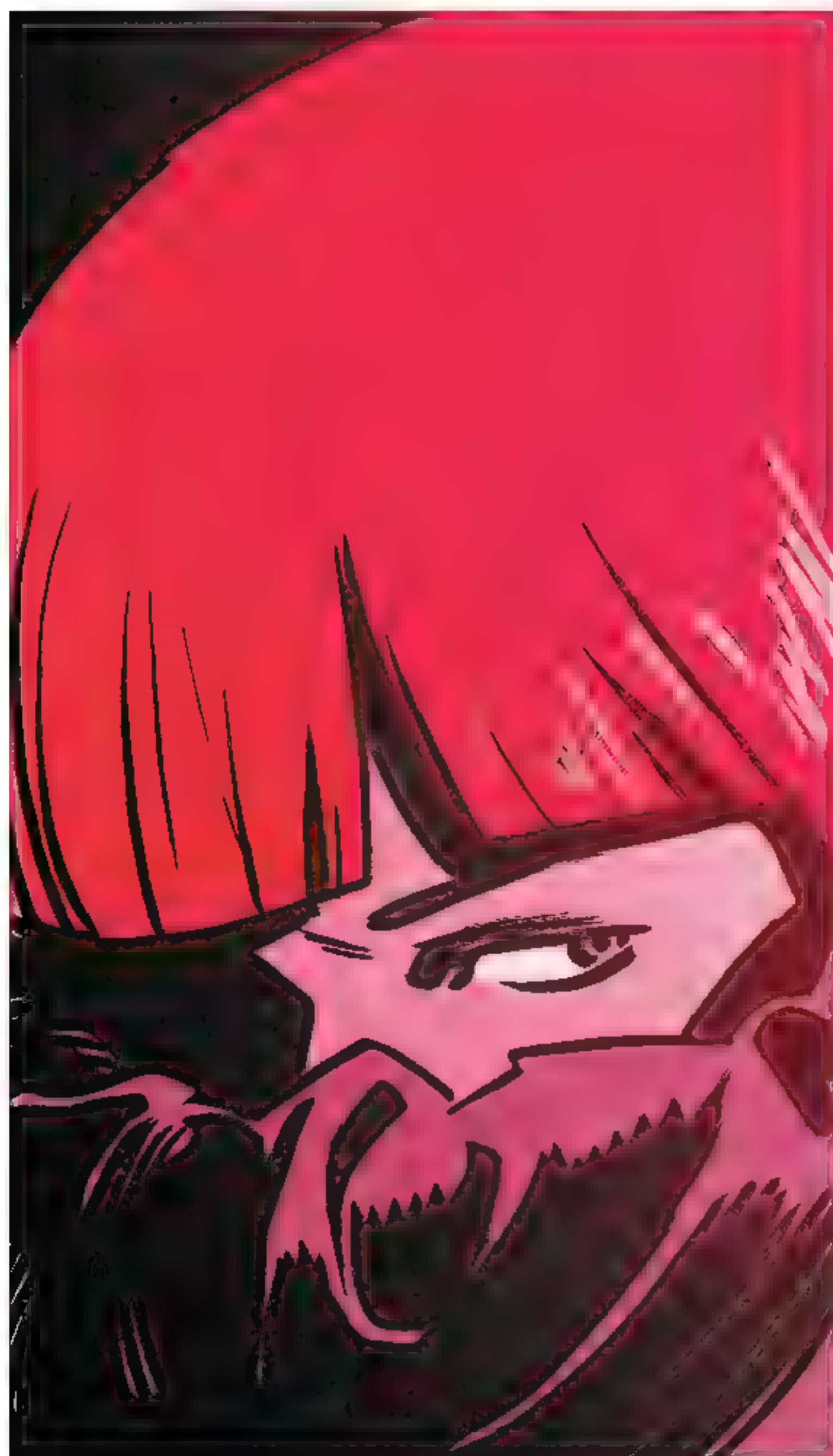


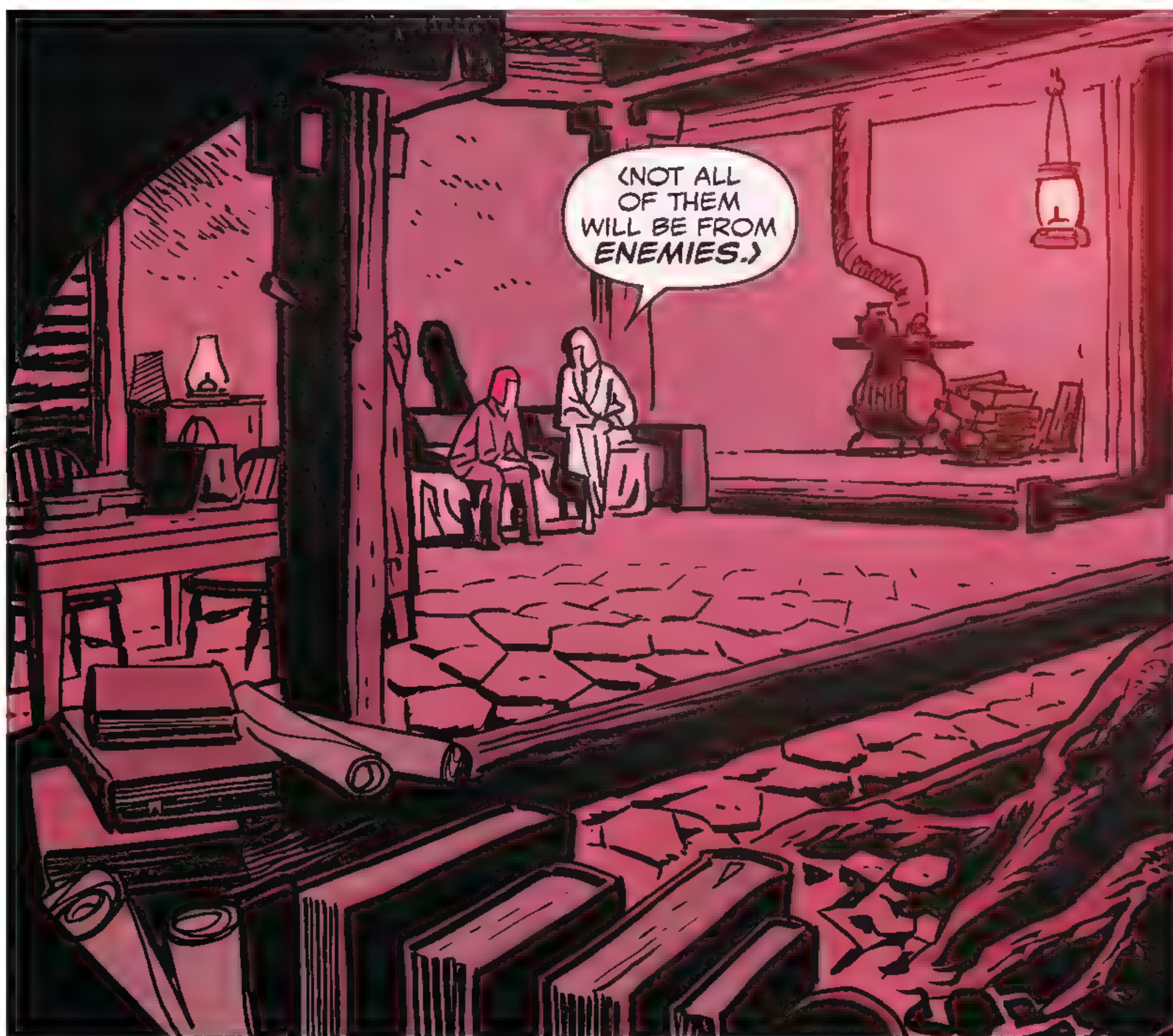
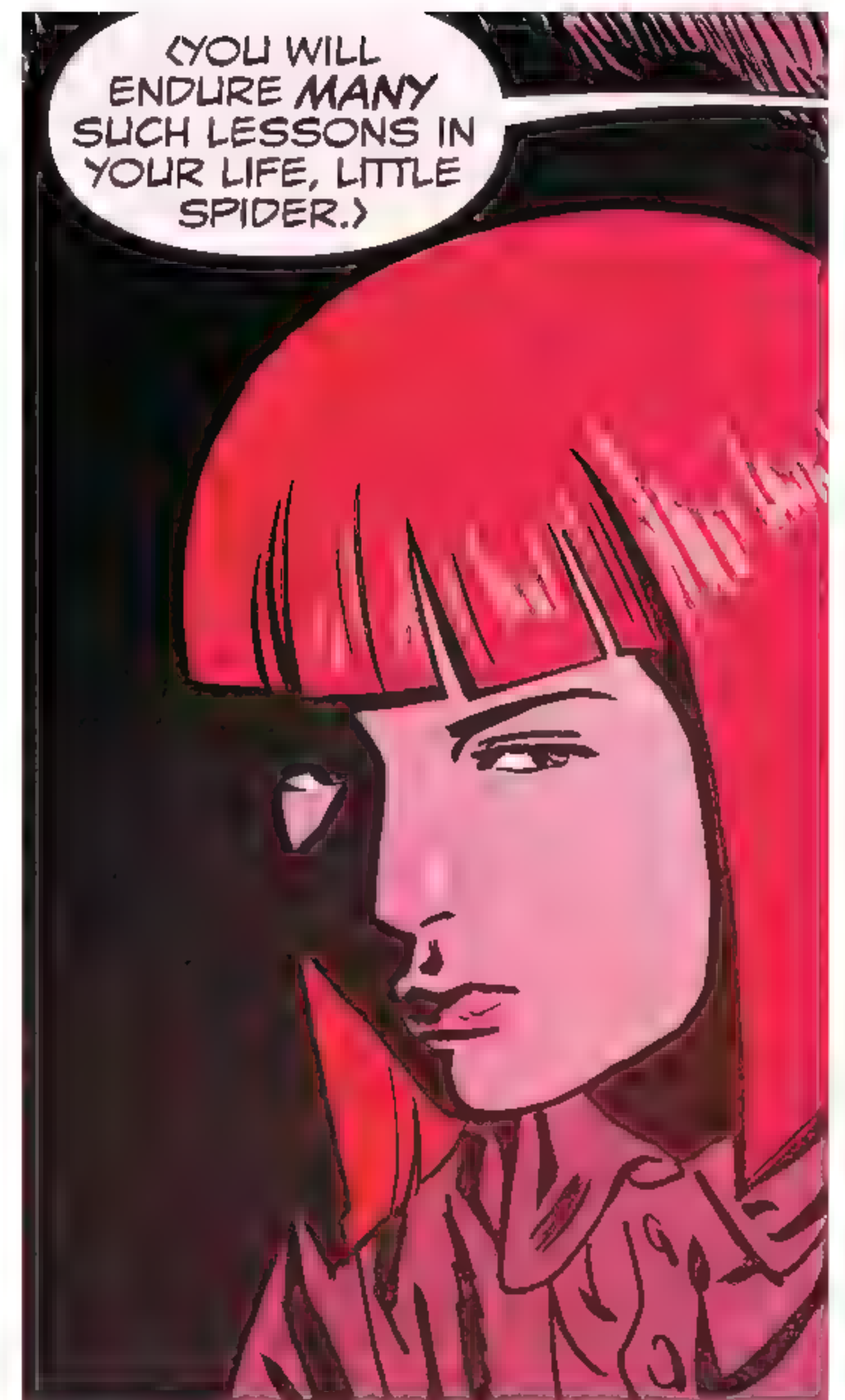


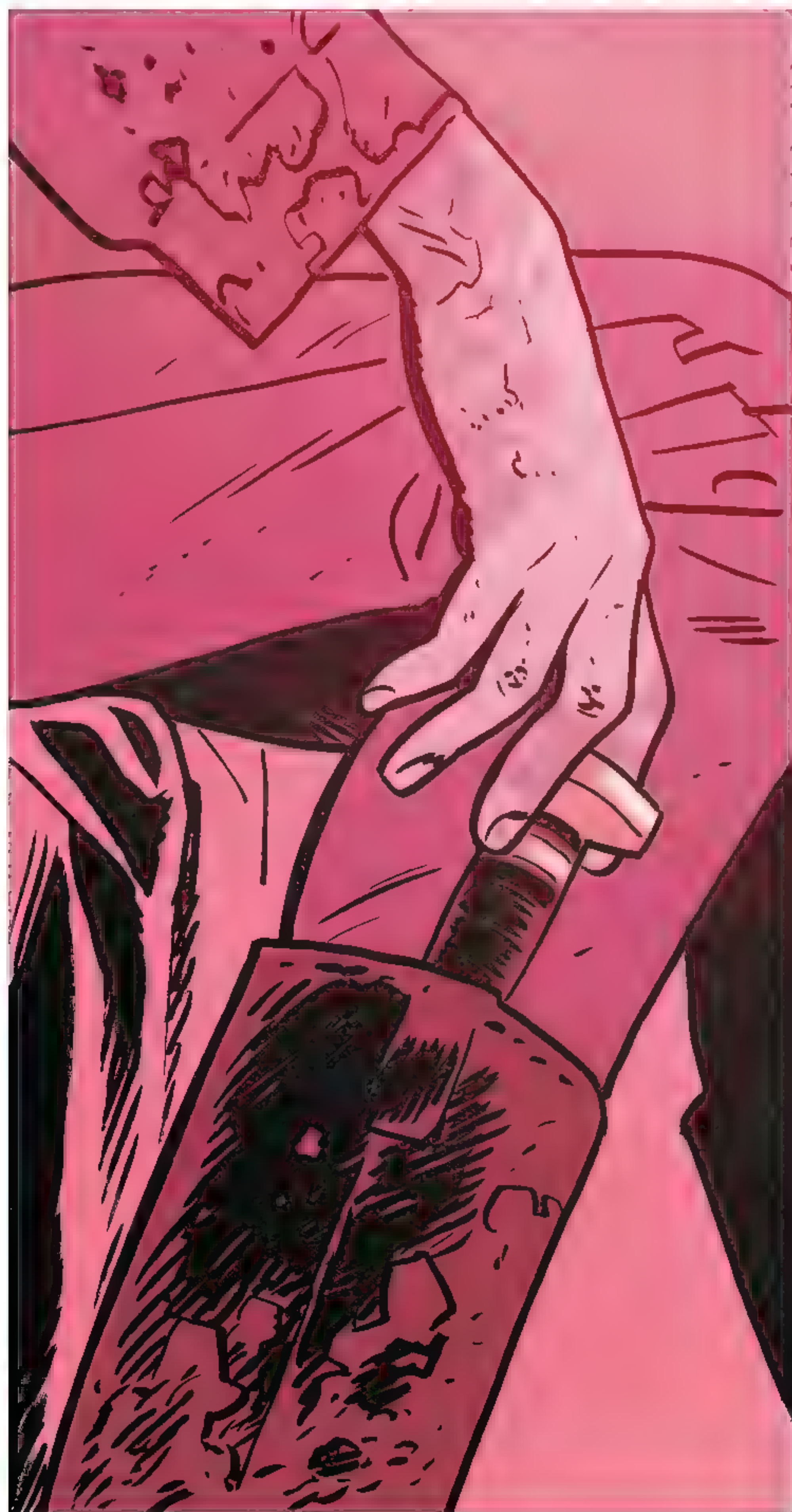
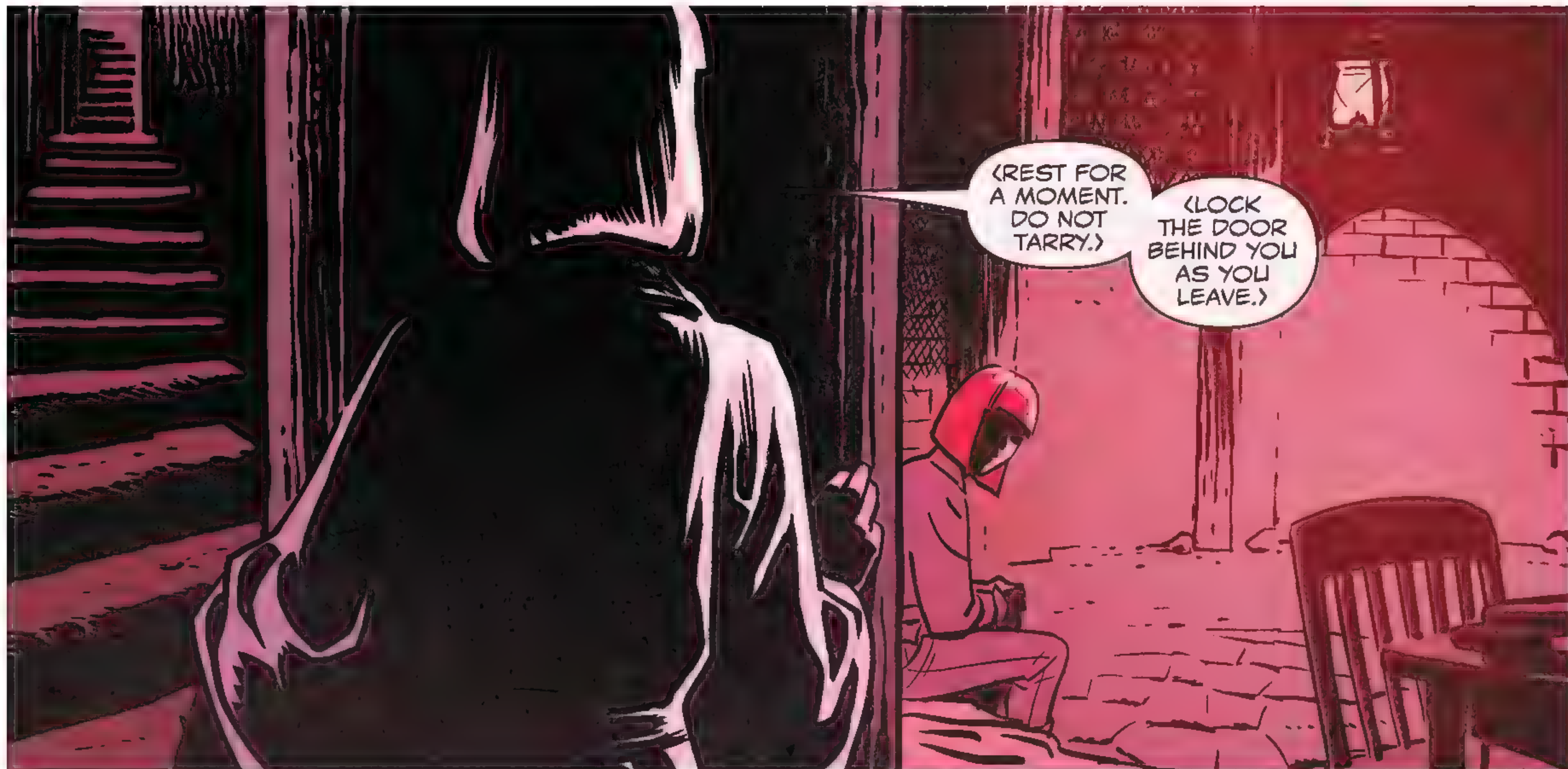


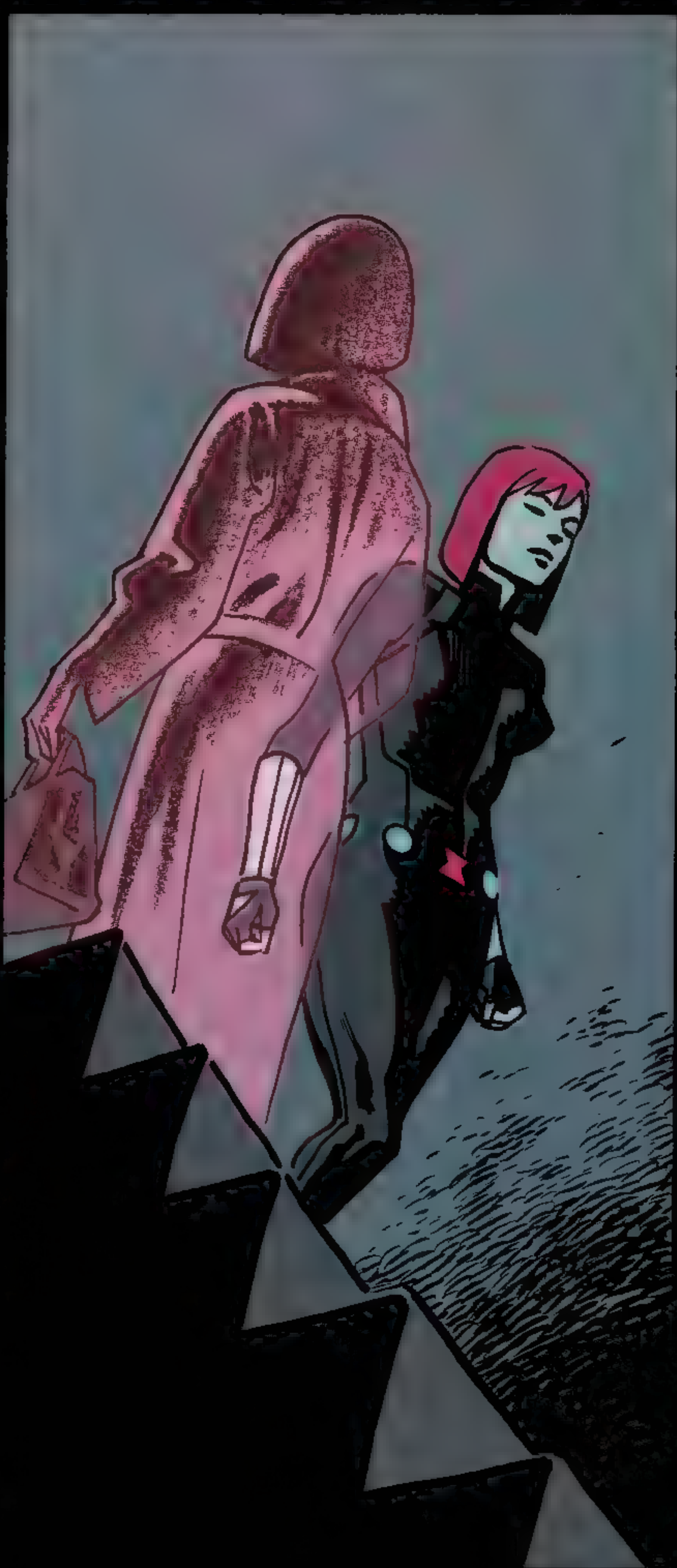
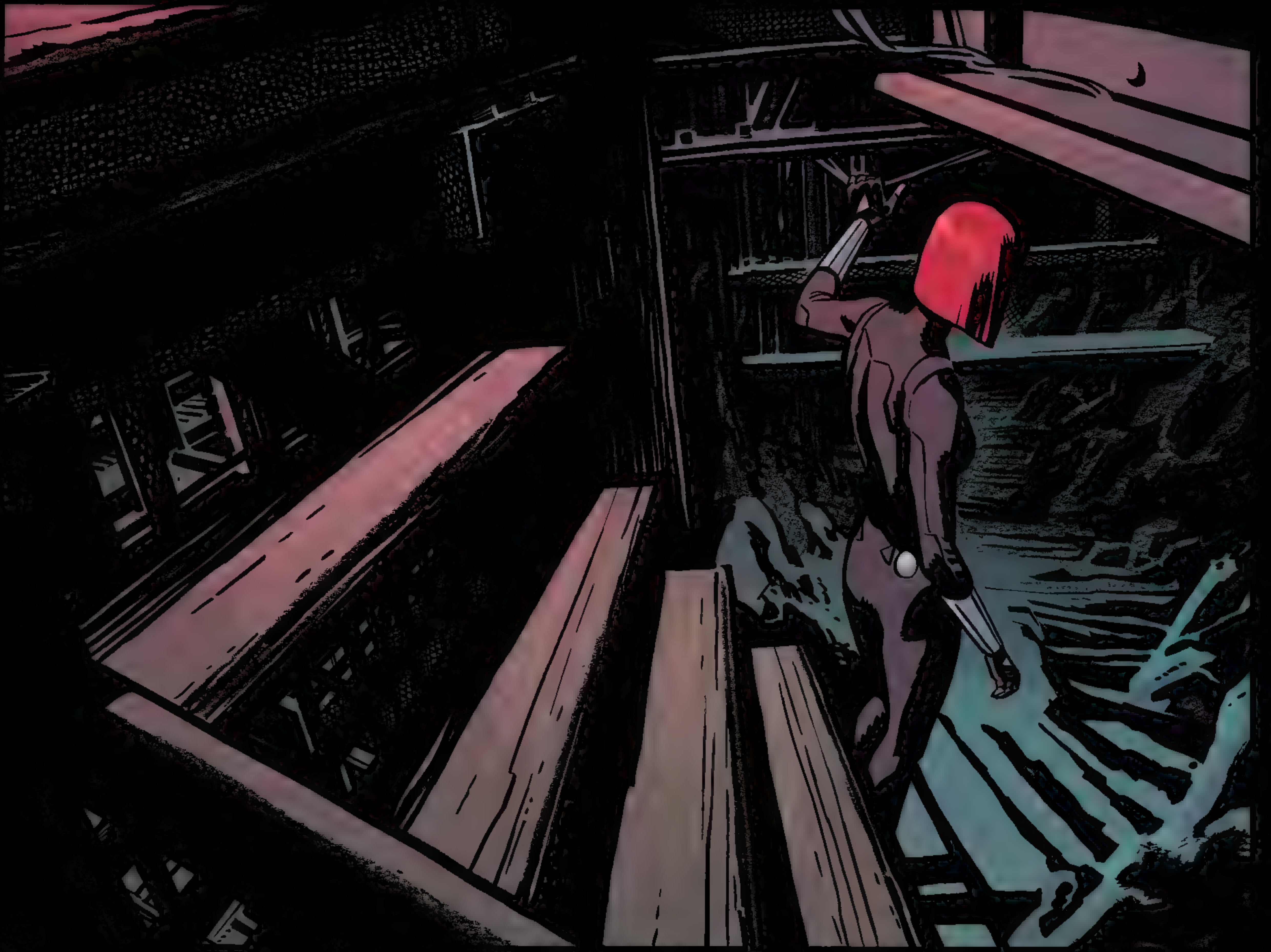




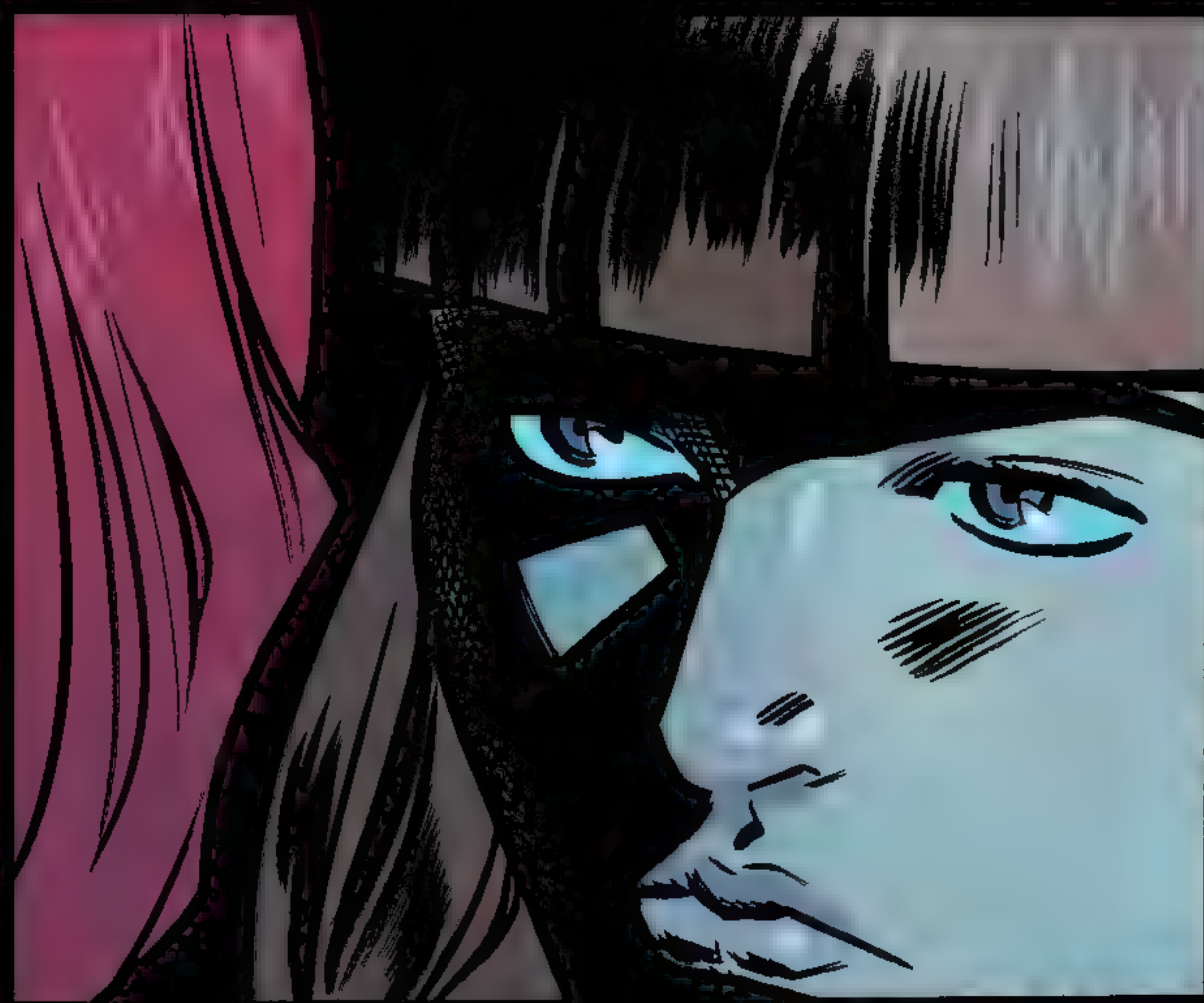




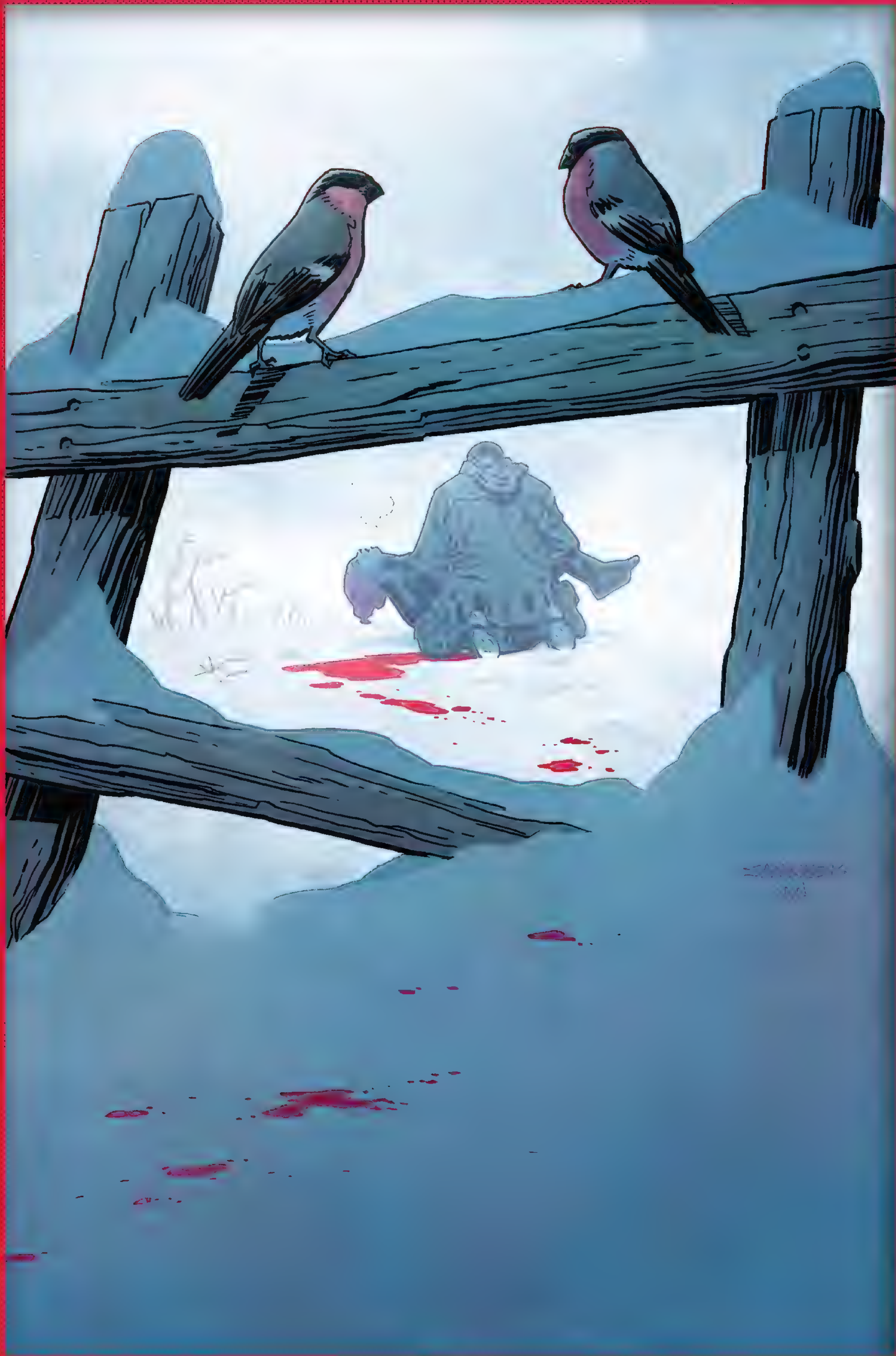


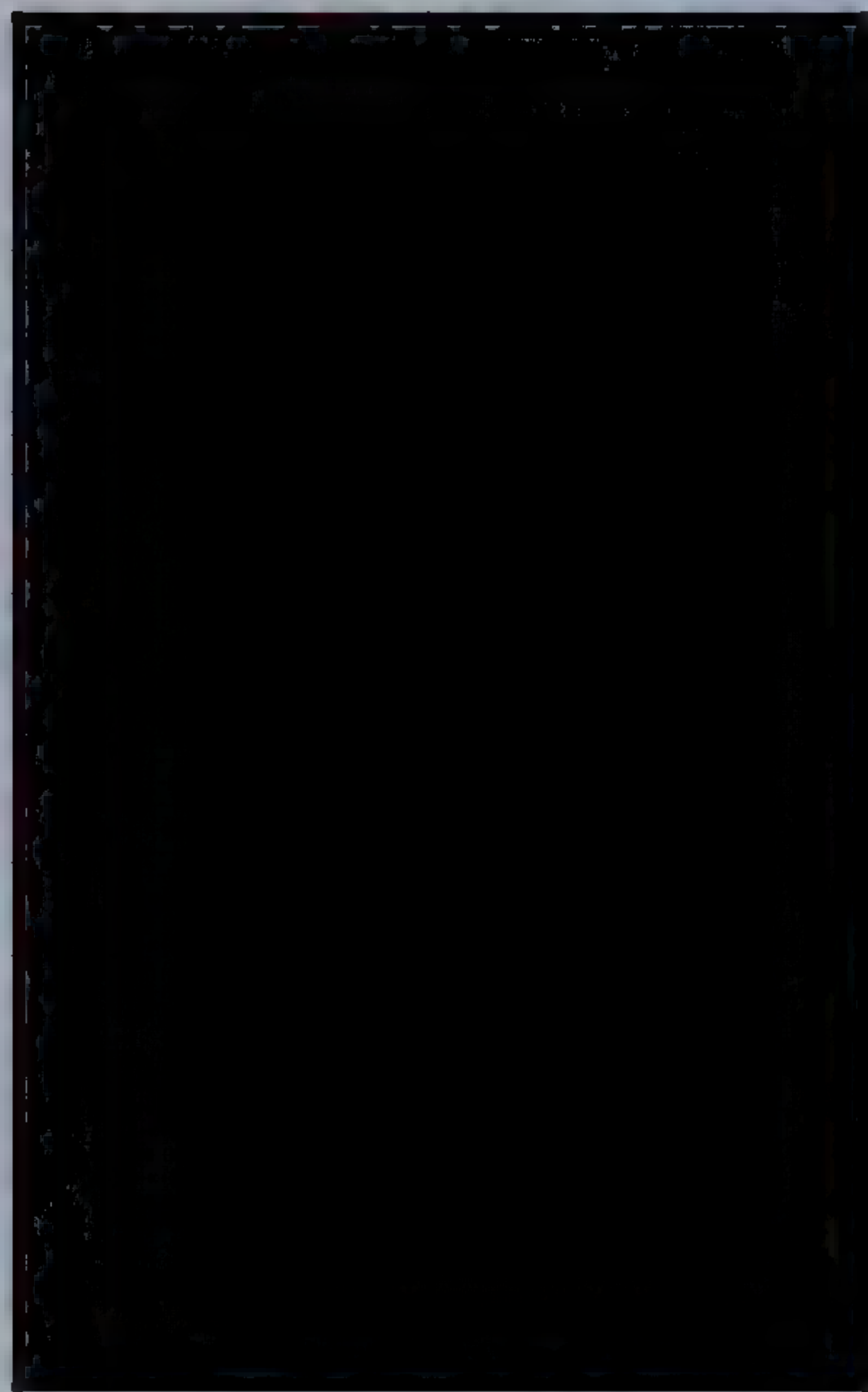
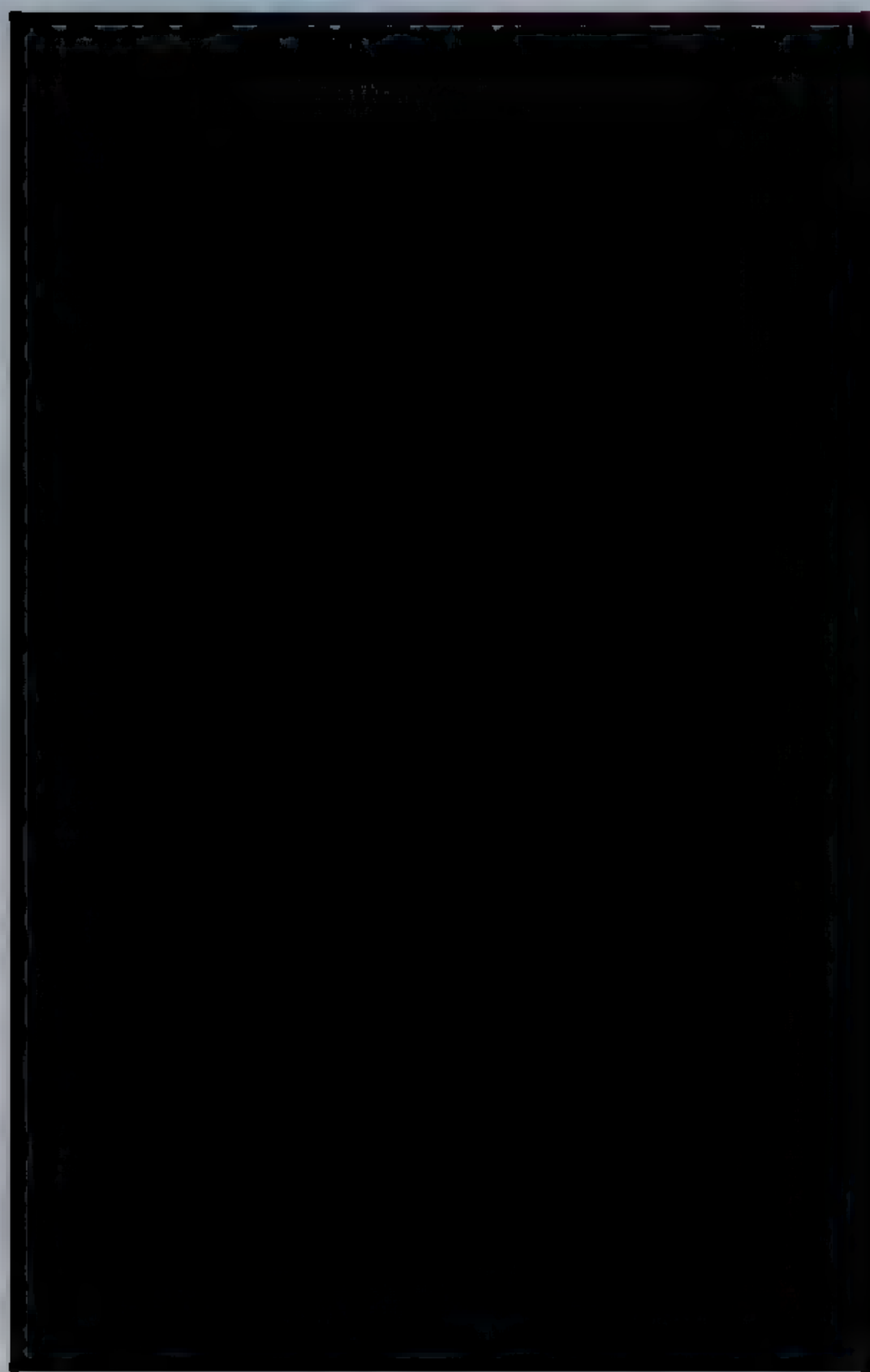




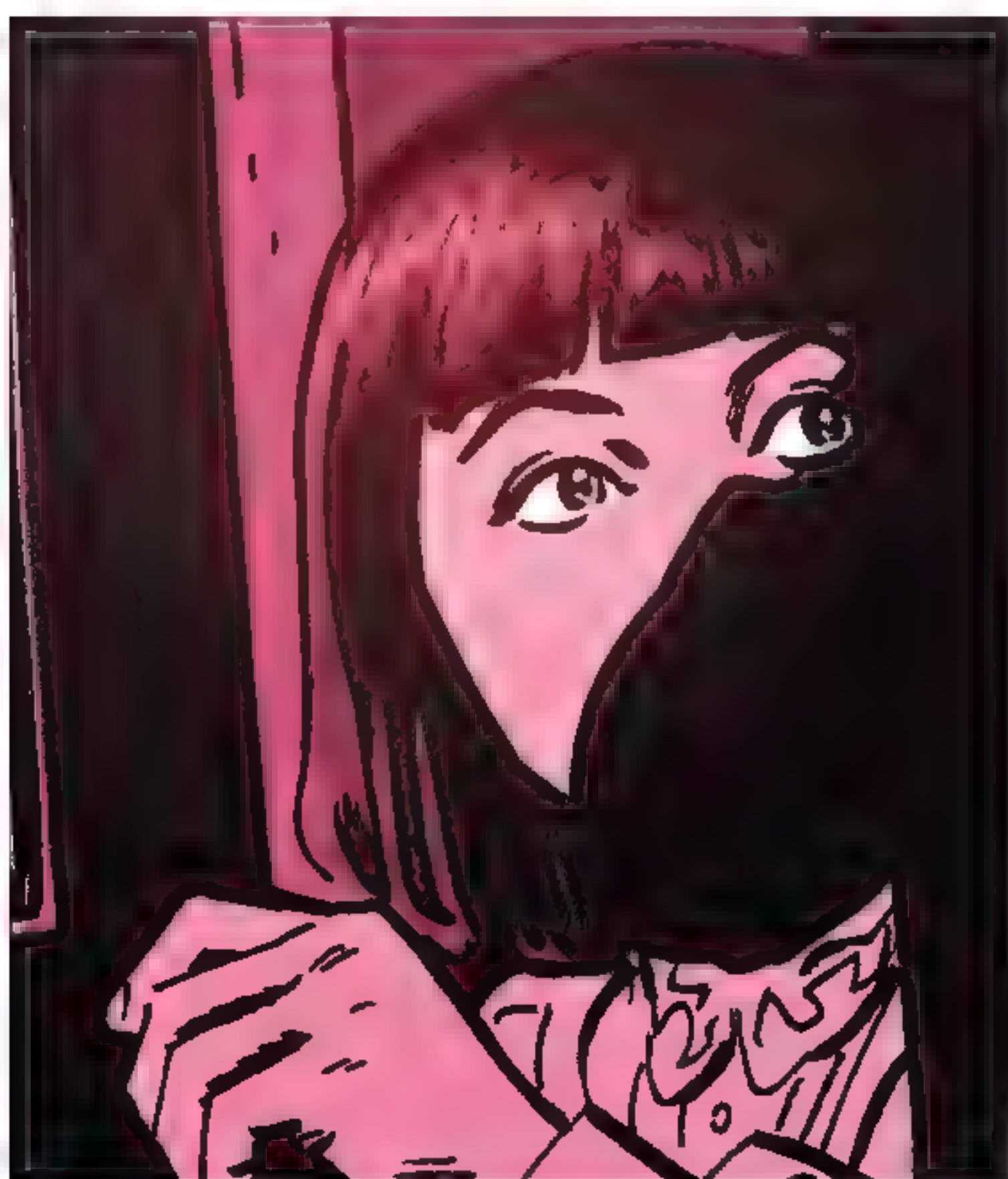
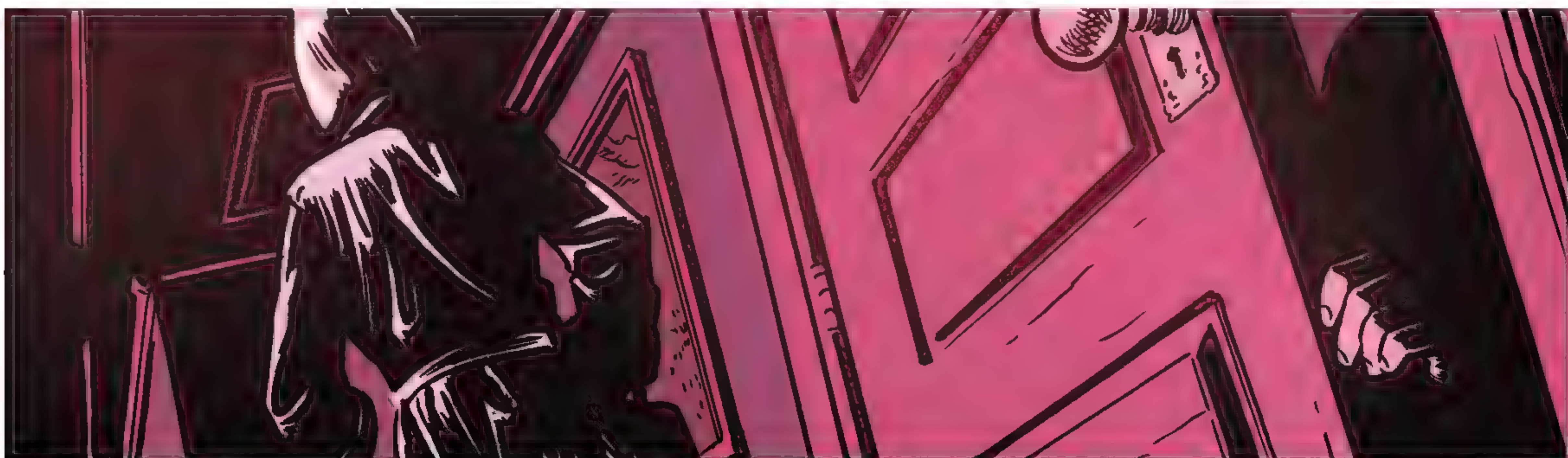


GHKKT-T---*



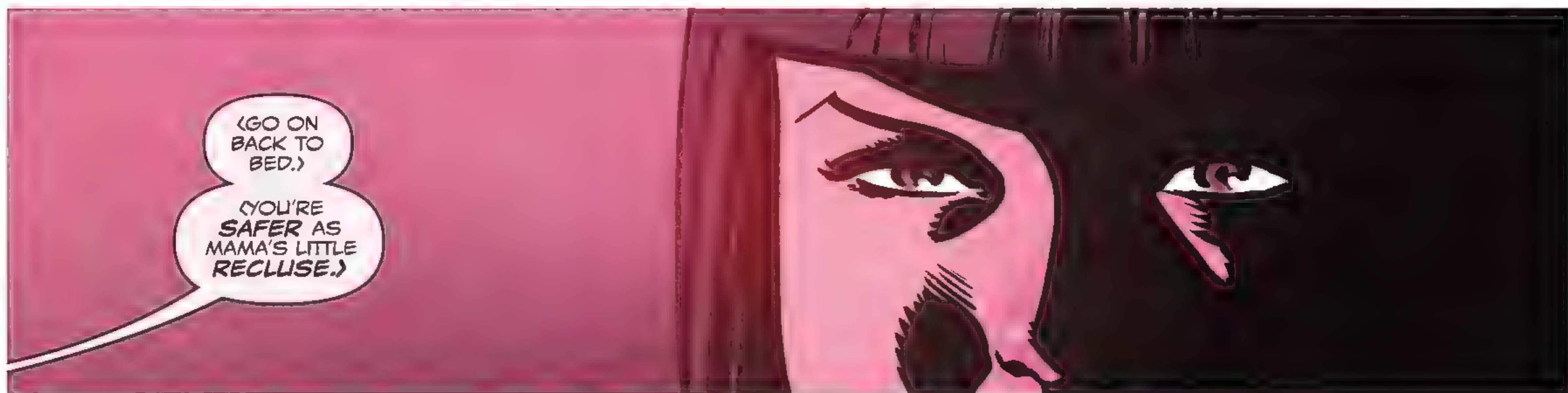


THEN.



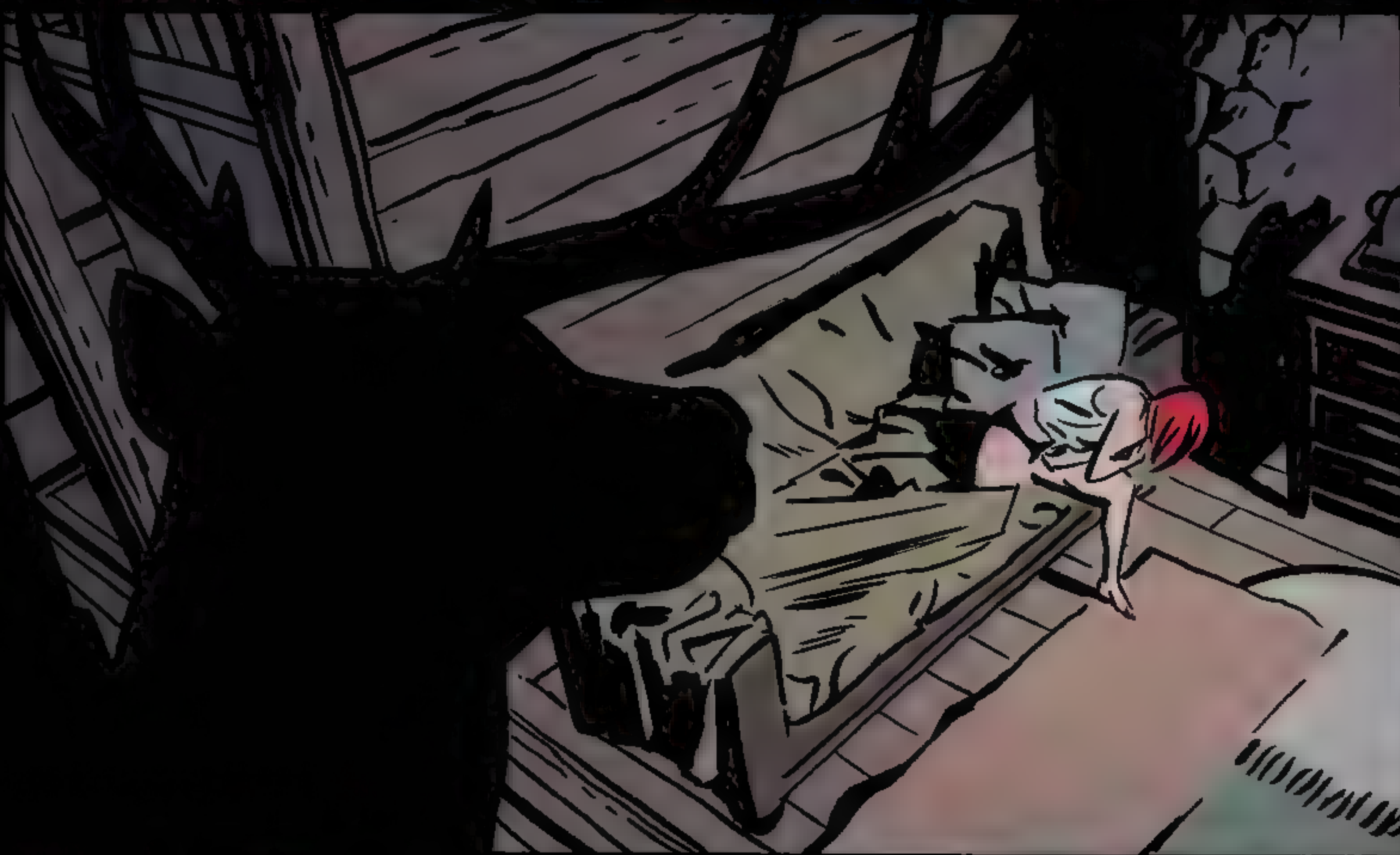


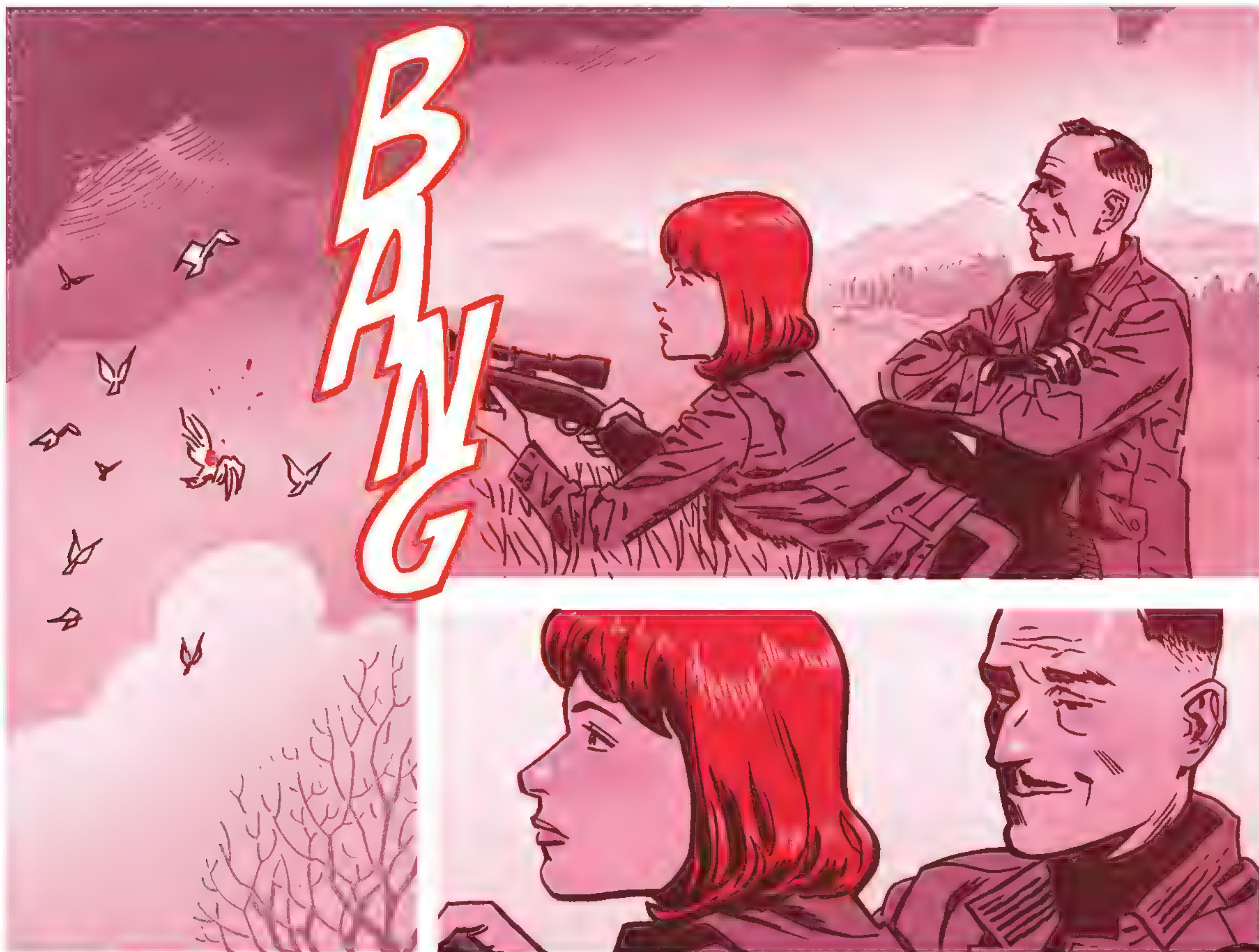
*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.





BANG!







-SSSSS-

TENDER. I REMEMBER YOU BEING BETTER AT SUTURING.

THESE OLD HANDS AREN'T AS STEADY AS THEY USED TO BE.



MOST OF US CAN'T HIT **SNOOZE** ON THE RAVAGES OF TIME.



YOU'RE WELCOME, BY THE WAY.



IOSEF--

STOP.



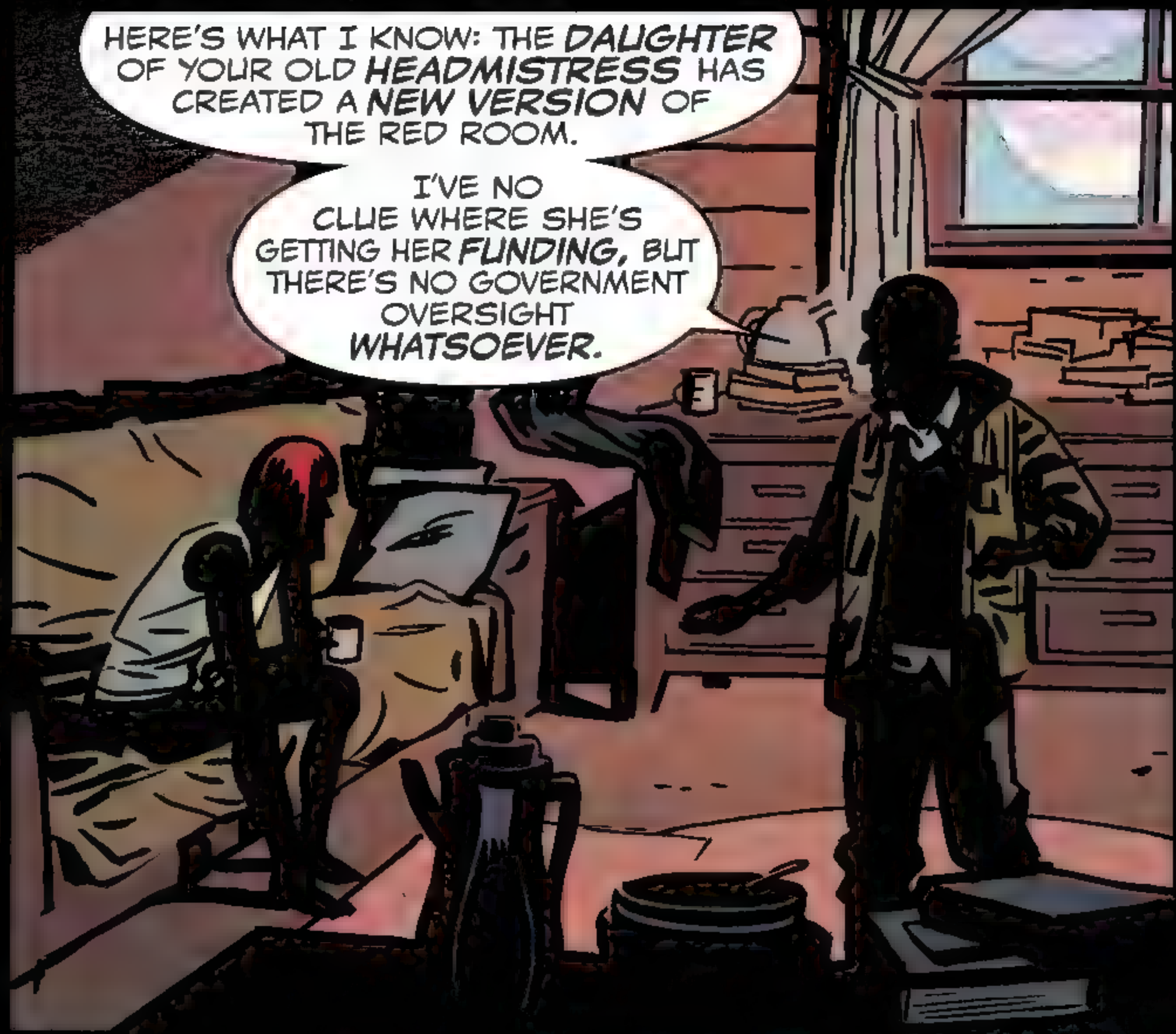
DON'T SQUANDER YOUR ENERGY ON **PLEASANTRIES**.

I WON'T RECOGNIZE YOU.



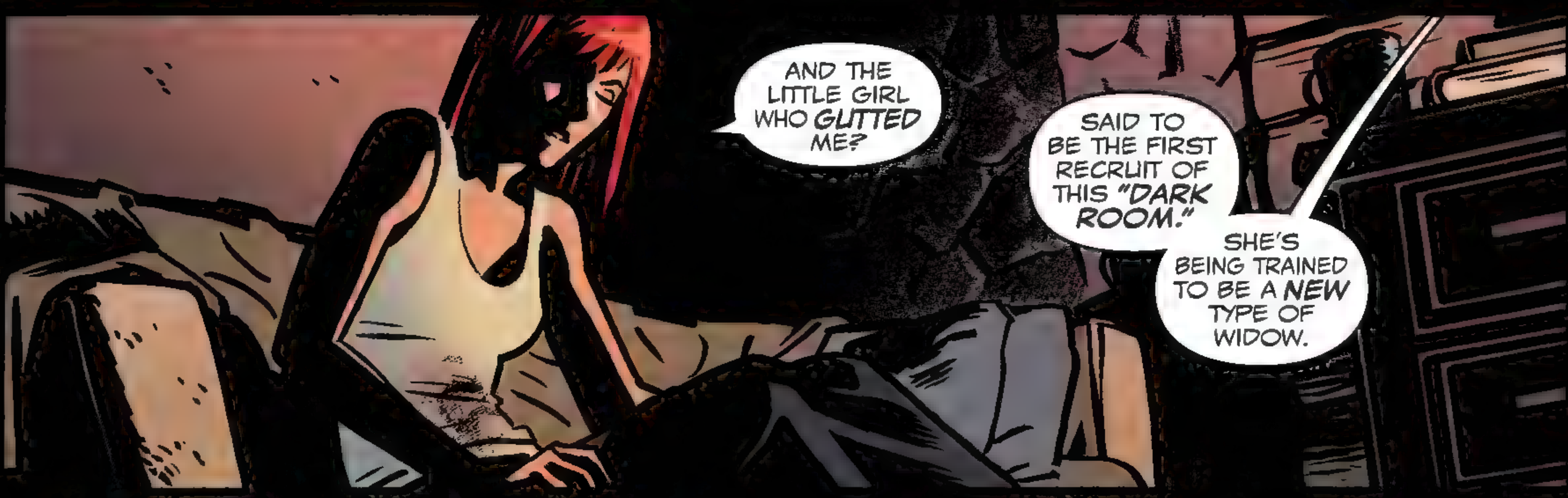
I NEVER MEANT TO--

YOU LEFT ONCE I'D TAUGHT YOU ALL I COULD. THAT IS THE WAY OF OUR KIND.



HERE'S WHAT I KNOW: THE DAUGHTER OF YOUR OLD HEADMISTRESS HAS CREATED A NEW VERSION OF THE RED ROOM.

I'VE NO CLUE WHERE SHE'S GETTING HER FUNDING, BUT THERE'S NO GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT WHATSOEVER.



AND THE LITTLE GIRL WHO GUTTED ME?

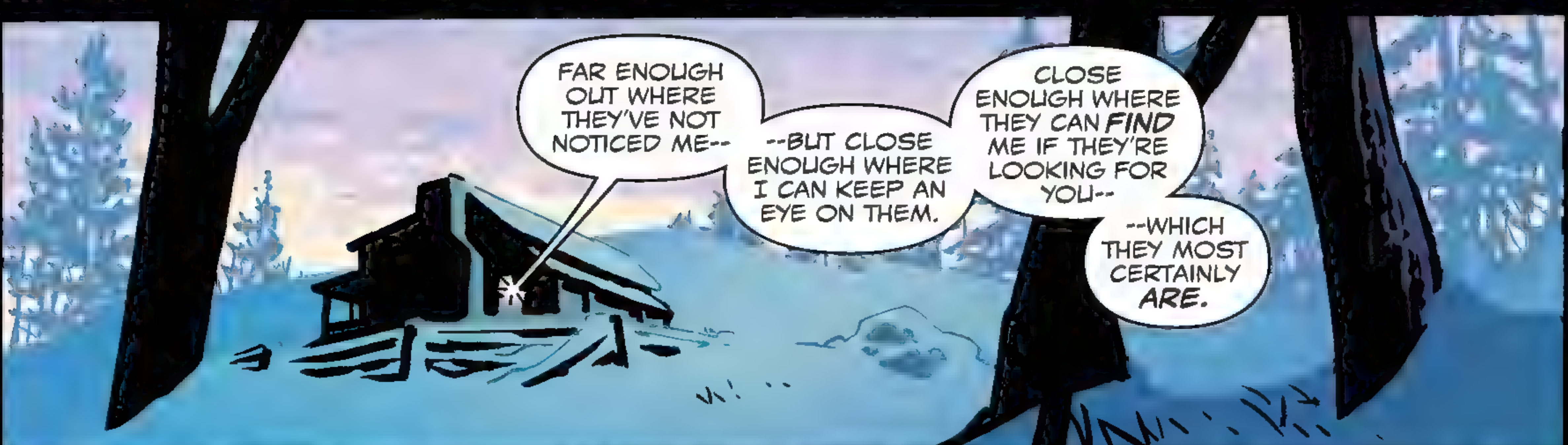
SAID TO BE THE FIRST RECRUIT OF THIS "DARK ROOM."

SHE'S BEING TRAINED TO BE A NEW TYPE OF WIDOW.



AND EVEN AT HER TENDER AGE, FROM THE LOOKS OF HER HANDIWORK, I'D SAY SHE'S WELL ON HER WAY.

WHERE IS THIS "DARK ROOM"?



FAR ENOUGH OUT WHERE THEY'VE NOT NOTICED ME--

--BUT CLOSE ENOUGH WHERE I CAN KEEP AN EYE ON THEM.

CLOSE ENOUGH WHERE THEY CAN FIND ME IF THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU--

--WHICH THEY MOST CERTAINLY ARE.



IF I KNOW YOU, YOU'RE ARMED TO THE **TEETH** AND YOU HAVE EYES ALL AROUND.

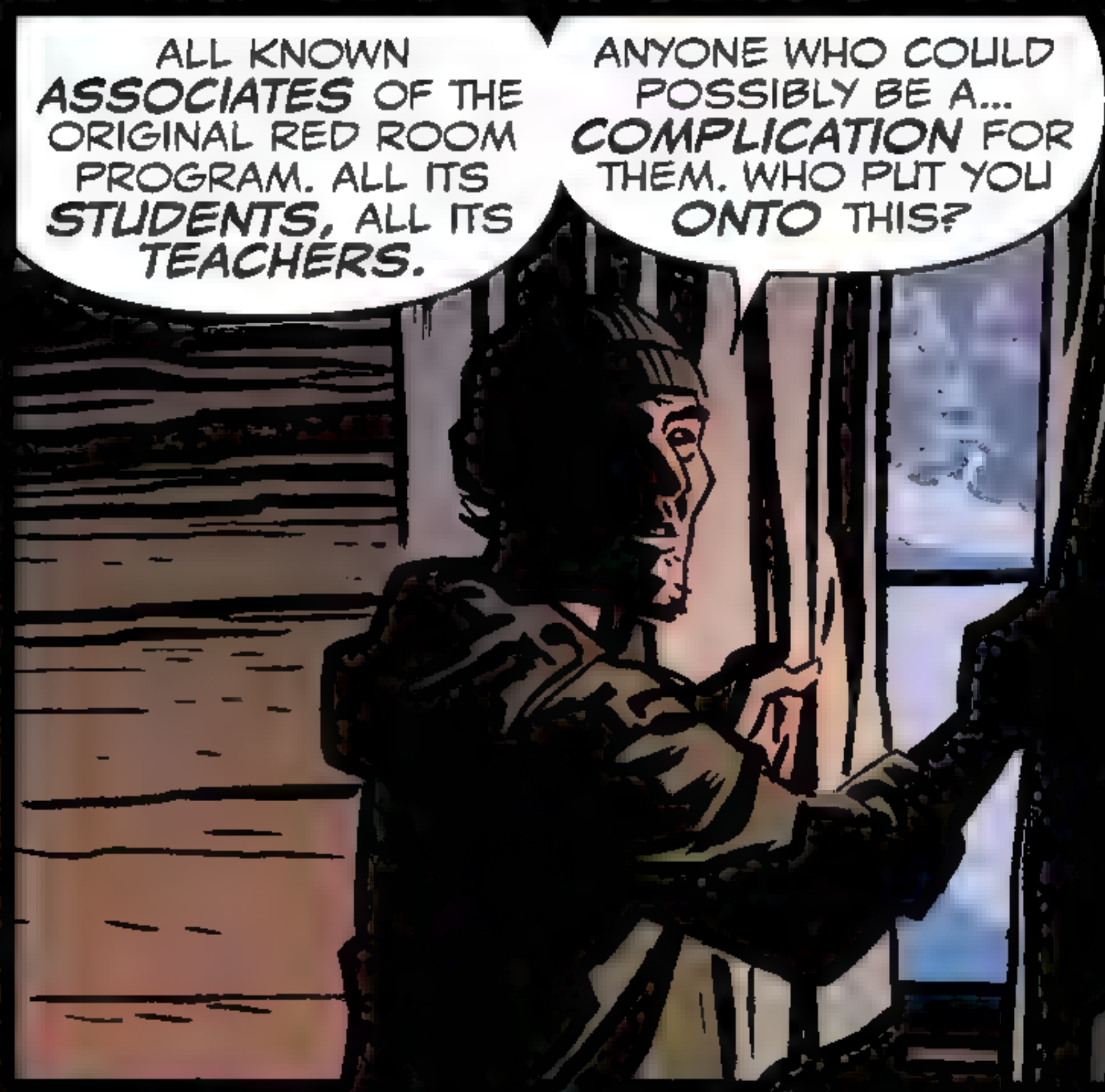


I'M OFF MY GAME. I **RETIRED** AFTER--

--WELL, YOU KNOW.

BESIDES, I'M ON THE **LIST**.

THE ONE I WAS SENT TO FIND.



ALL KNOWN ASSOCIATES OF THE ORIGINAL RED ROOM PROGRAM. ALL ITS STUDENTS, ALL ITS TEACHERS.

ANYONE WHO COULD POSSIBLY BE A... **COMPLICATION** FOR THEM. WHO PUT YOU ONTO THIS?



HE CALLS HIMSELF THE **WEeping LION**. HE'S ATTEMPTING TO **BLACKMAIL** ME INTO **SERVITUDE**.

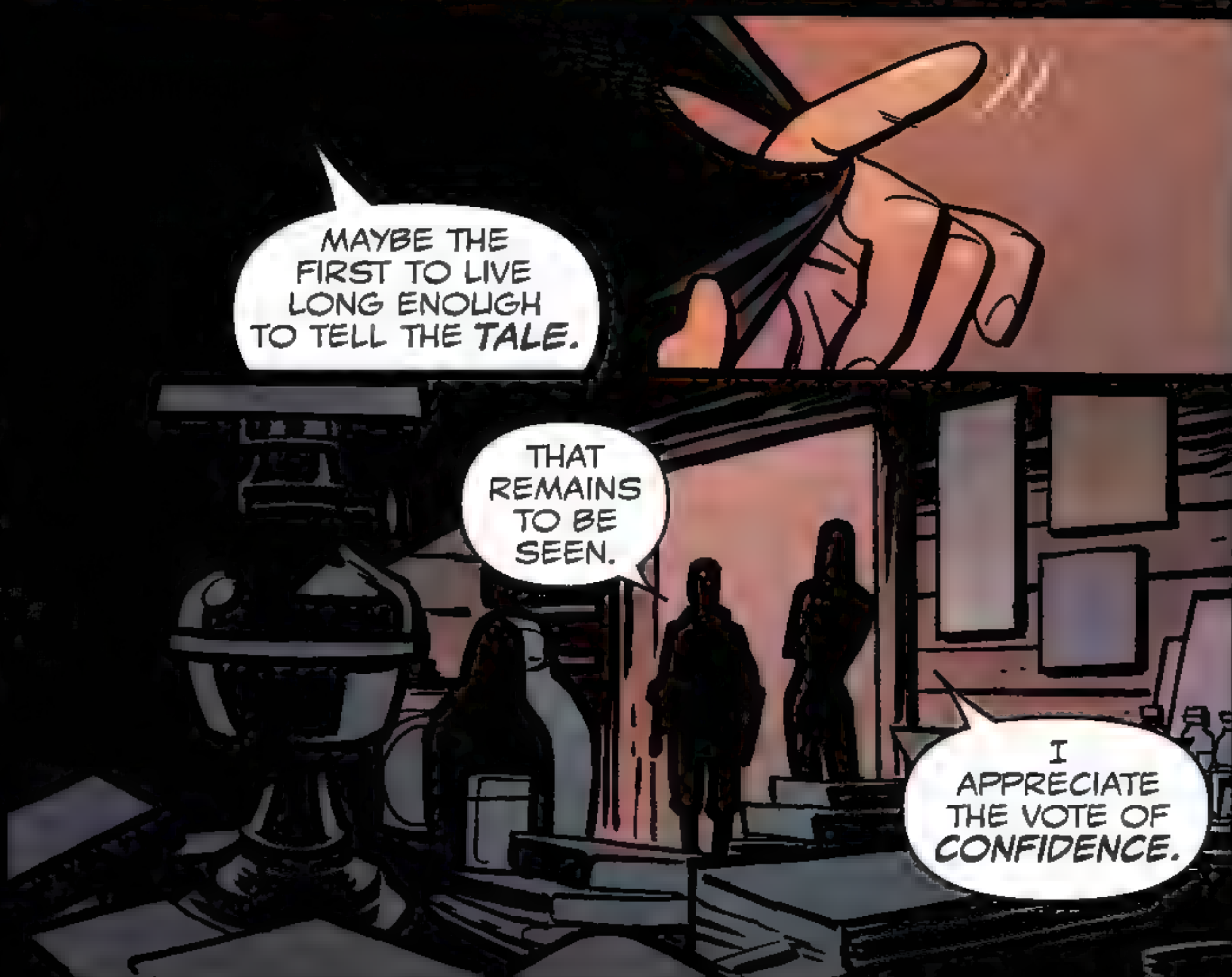
I'VE BEEN PLAYING ALONG WITH HIM UNTIL I COULD GET A SENSE OF HIS **ENDGAME**, BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO **FAIL**.

I'LL RETRIEVE THE **LIST**.



HOW DID YOU COME BY THESE CLOTHES?

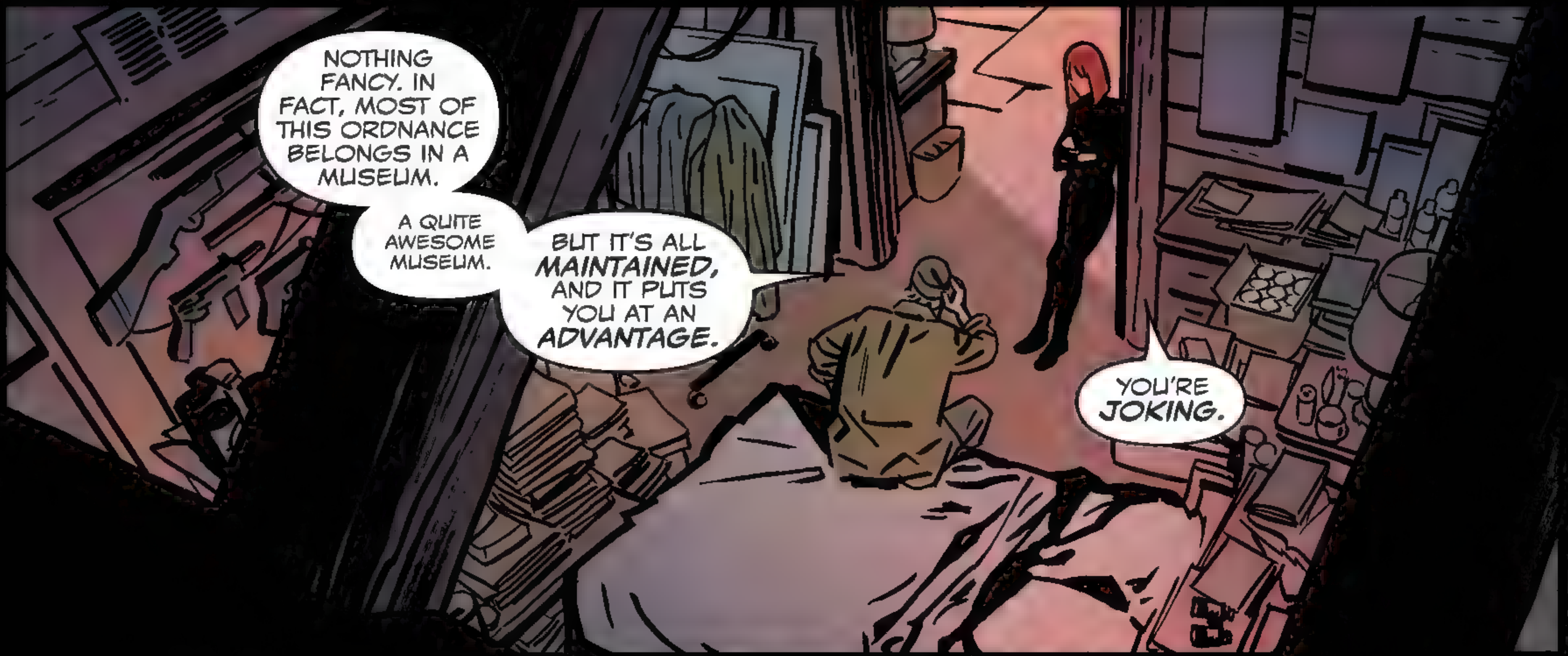
YOU THINK YOU'RE THE FIRST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN TO SEE THE INSIDE OF THIS CABIN?



MAYBE THE FIRST TO LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO TELL THE **TALE**.

THAT REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

I APPRECIATE THE VOTE OF **CONFIDENCE**.



12 HOURS
LATER.

YOU
CATCH ON
QUICK AS
EVER,
DEAR.

SEE HOW
PAINLESS
THAT
WAS?

IN OUR
LINE OF WORK,
IT'S BEST TO RELY
ON THE SIMPLE
TOOLS. *GIZMOS*
ARE FOR
AMATEURS.

I KNOW
SOME
AVENGERS
WHO'D
DISAGREE.

PFAH.
AVENGERS.
SHOWBOATS IN
COSTUMES ARE
BENEATH
YOU, NAT.

YOU WERE
MADE FOR
ESPIONAGE.

MADE
ALMOST FROM
BIRTH.

WELCOME
BACK TO THE
COLD.

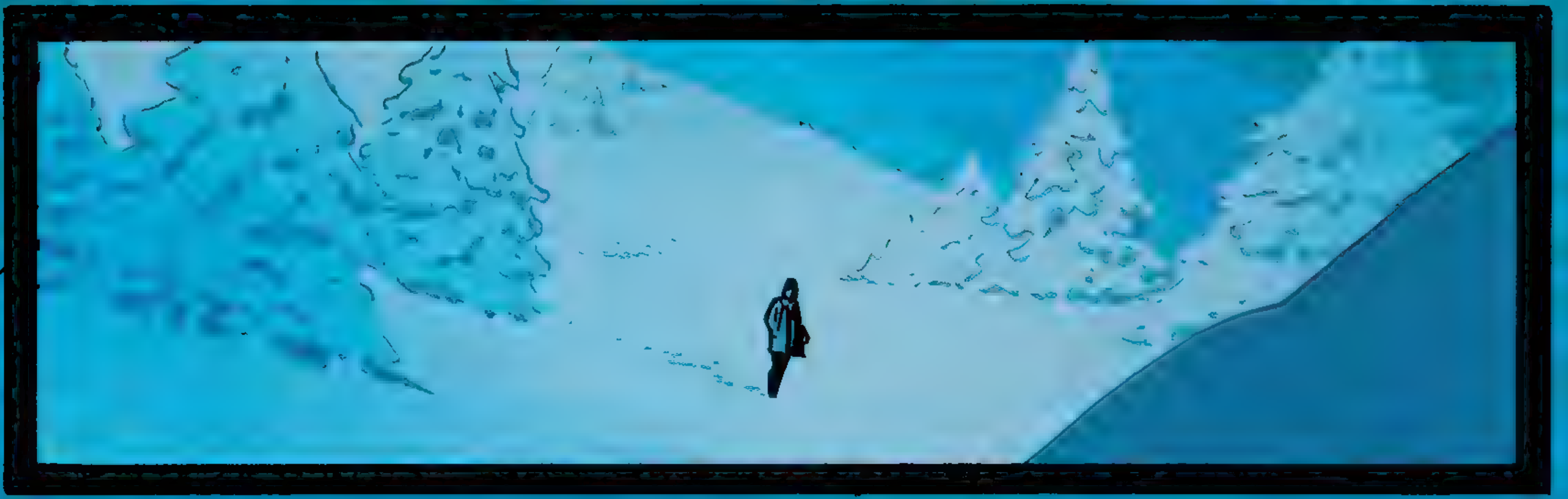
CHARMER.

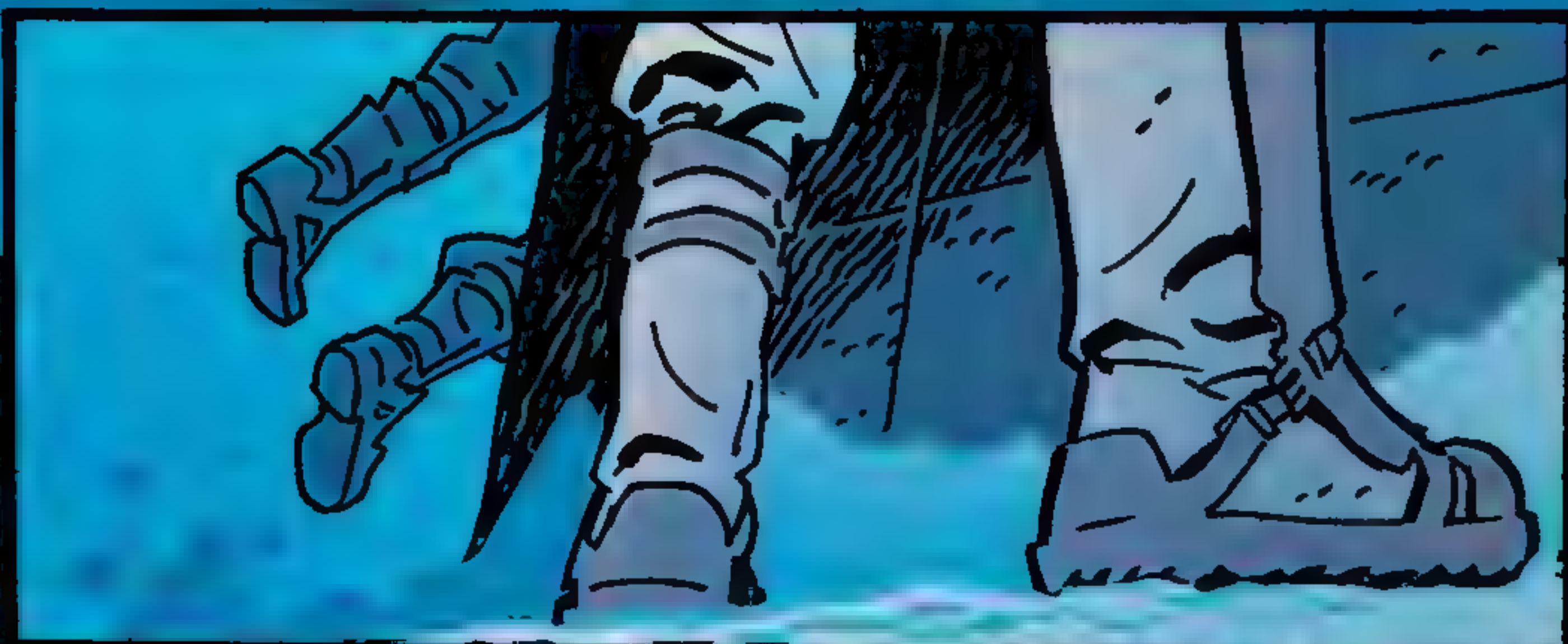
THROW
ANOTHER LOG
ON. IF I'M NOT
BACK BY DAYBREAK,
YOU'RE ON
YOUR OWN.

AS
EVER.

GOOD
LUCK,
NAT.

YOU'LL
NEED
IT.





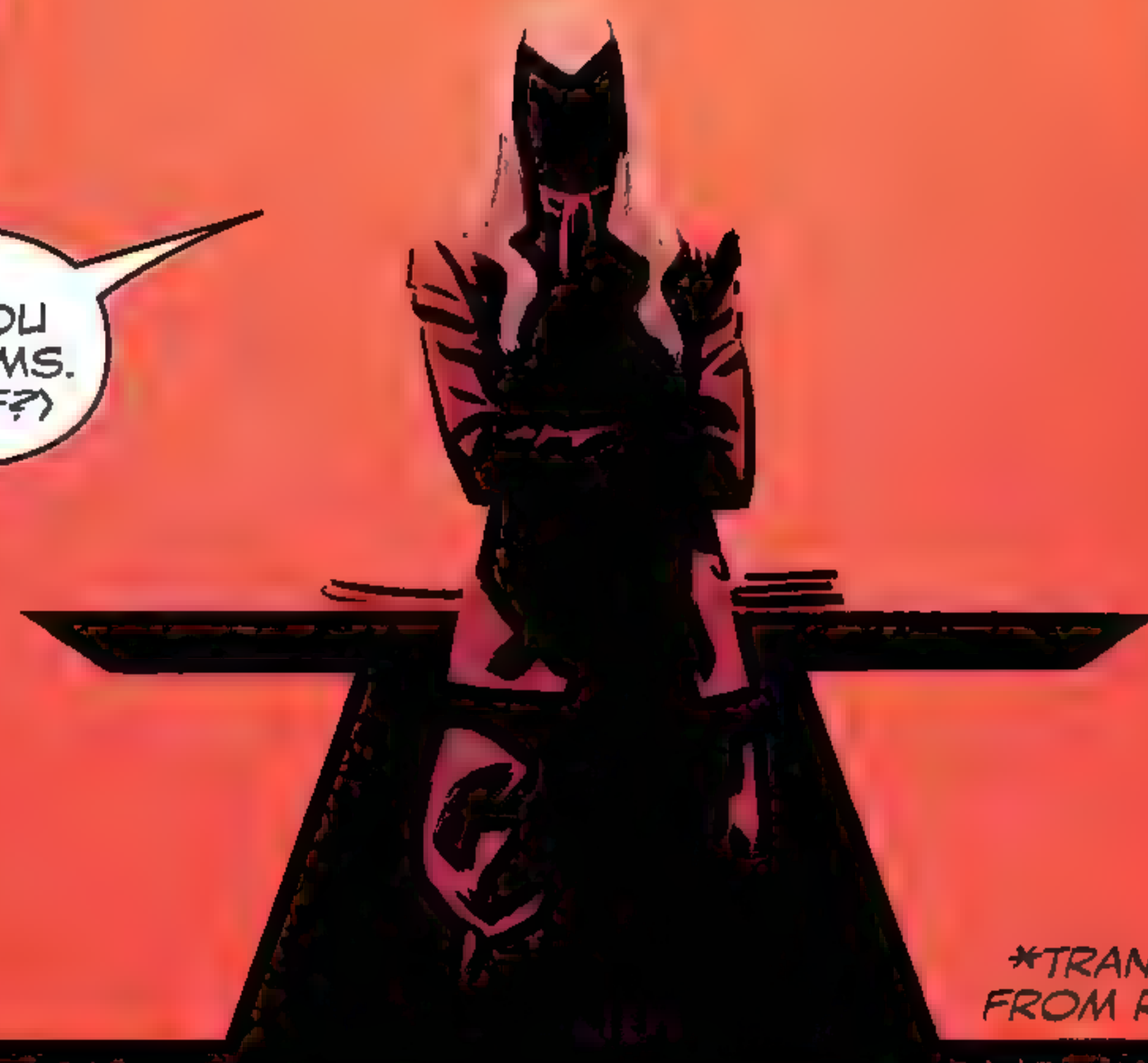




(IF YOU'D STAYED WITH ME, YOU WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD TO **BREAK** INSIDE.)*

(TCH, TCH, TCH.)

(WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG, MS. ROMANOFF?)



*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.



(WHO...?)

(HEADMISTRESS?)



(REMEMBER WHAT I ALWAYS TAUGHT YOU ABOUT TIME.)



(IT IS THE ENEMY OF ALL LIVING THINGS.)

(THE YEARS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN KIND TO YOU, OF COURSE.)

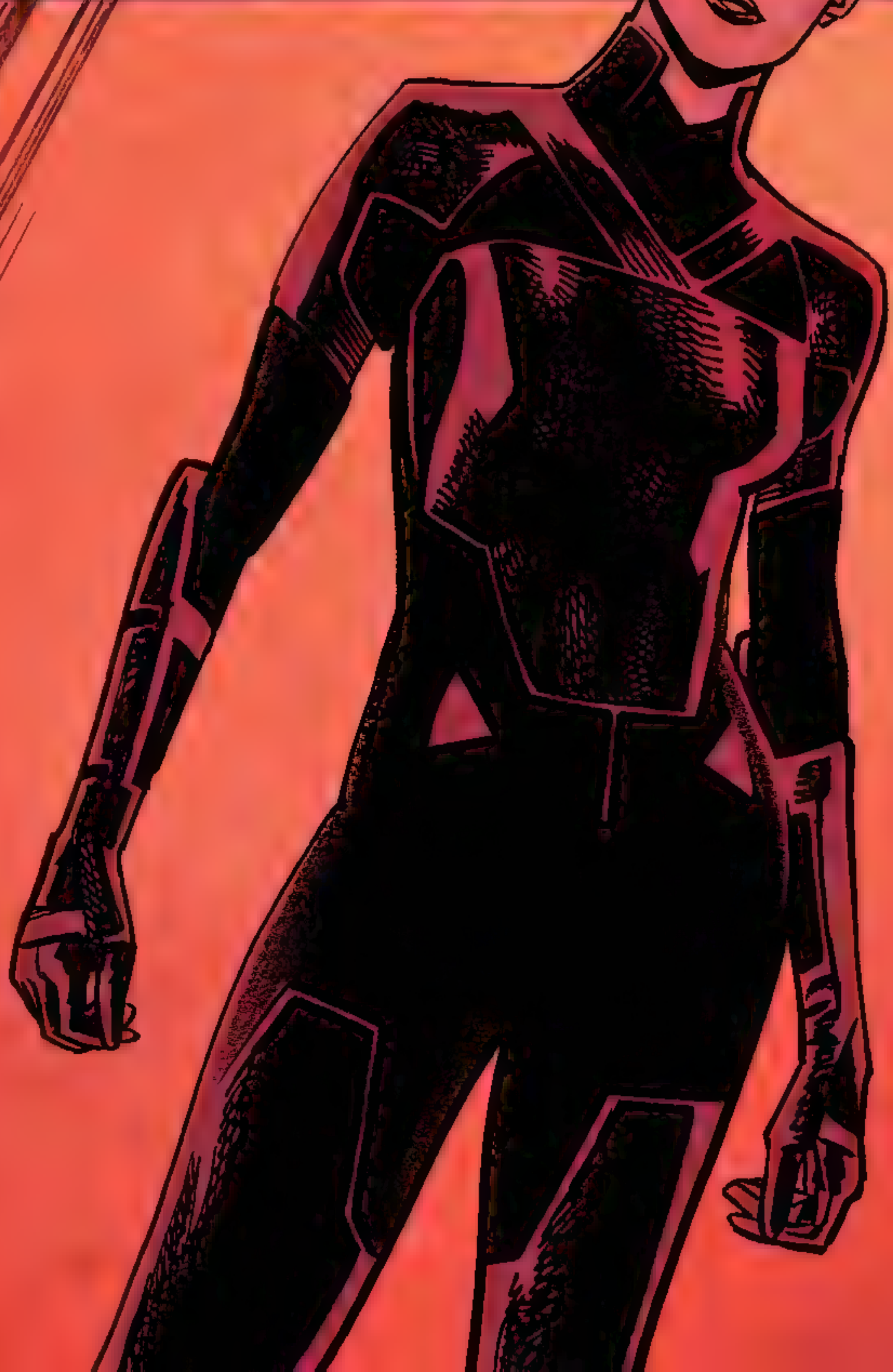
(UNTIL NOW.)



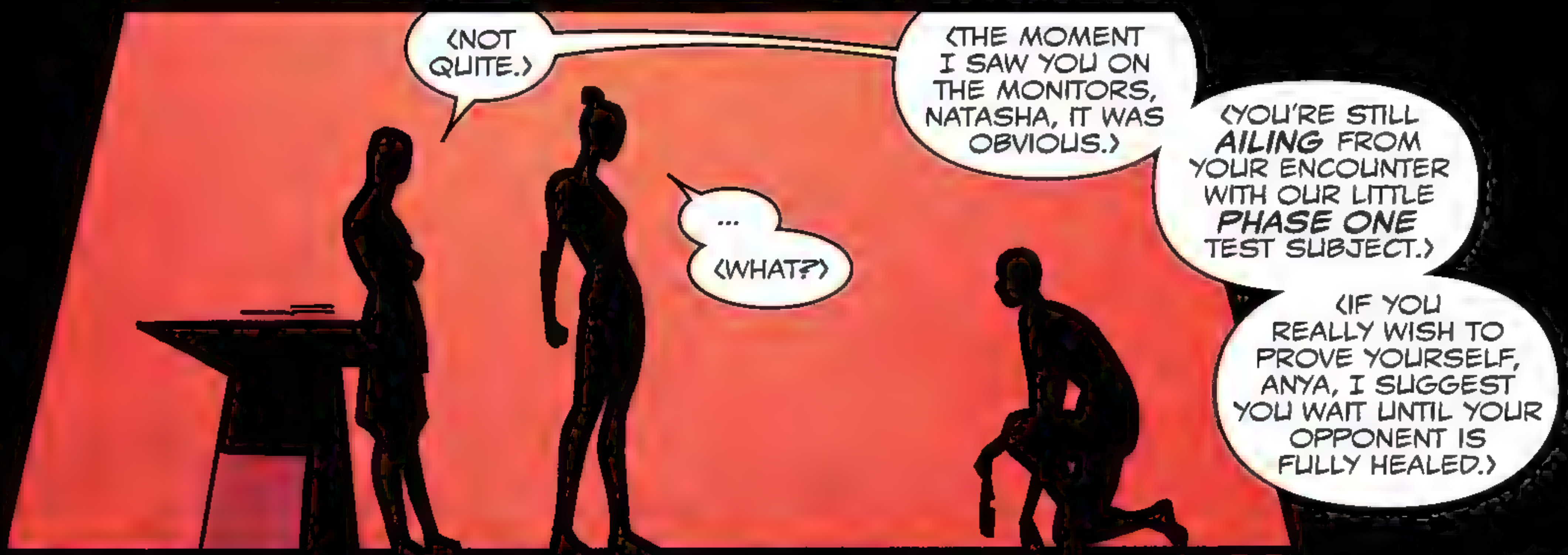
(SAY
HELLO TO MY
NEW LITTLE
SPIDER.)



(ANYA?)
(MAMA'S
LITTLE RECLUSE
STILL SCUTTLES
ABOUT IN THE
SHADOWS?)



(NO ONE
IS HIDING,
NATASHA.)
(AND I
NO LONGER
"BELONG" TO
MOTHER.)
(SHE
WORKS FOR
ME NOW.)
(GROWING
UP, SHE DID NOT
ALLOW ME TO TRAIN
WITH THE REST OF YOU.
I HAVE...ENCOURAGED
HER TO MAKE...
REPARATIONS ON
THAT FRONT.)
(WE ARE
PHYSICAL
EQUALS NOW,
YOU AND I,
NATASHA.)



«NOT
QUITE.»

«THE MOMENT
I SAW YOU ON
THE MONITORS,
NATASHA, IT WAS
OBVIOUS.»

«YOU'RE STILL
AILING FROM
YOUR ENCOUNTER
WITH OUR LITTLE
PHASE ONE
TEST SUBJECT.»

«IF YOU
REALLY WISH TO
PROVE YOURSELF,
ANYA, I SUGGEST
YOU WAIT UNTIL YOUR
OPPONENT IS
FULLY HEALED.»

...
«WHAT?»



«BUT--»

«IT'S UP TO
YOU, MY RECLUSE.
IT'S SIMPLY THAT IT
IS NO VICTORY TO
BEST A HOBBLING
FOE.»

«SHALL
I...?»



«THE FILES SHE
HUNTS? HAND THEM
OVER. I'VE NO
OBJECTION.»

«WE'VE ALL WE NEED FROM
THEM. THEY'RE OF NO USE
TO US. BUT IF THEY CAN KEEP
HER ALIVE LONG ENOUGH
TO PROVE A TRUE
CHALLENGE...»



«...THEN BY
ALL MEANS,
LET THE BABY
HAVE HER
BOTTLE.»

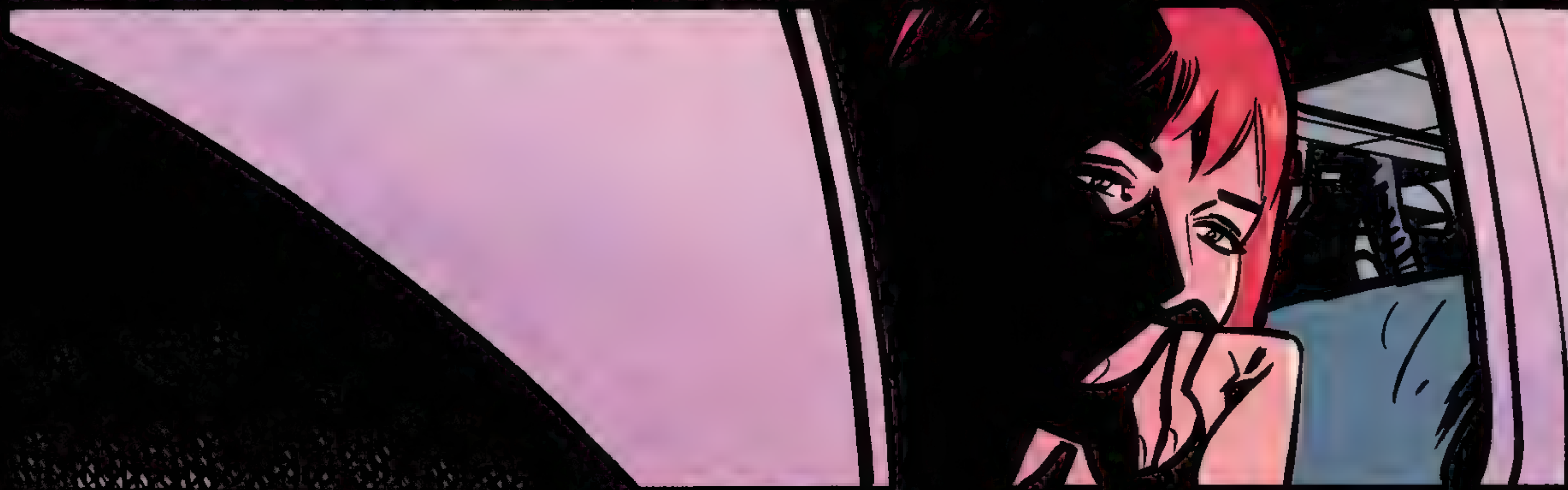


«SHE
WILL RETURN
SOMEDAY,
ANYA.»

«I'M
COUNTING
ON IT.»

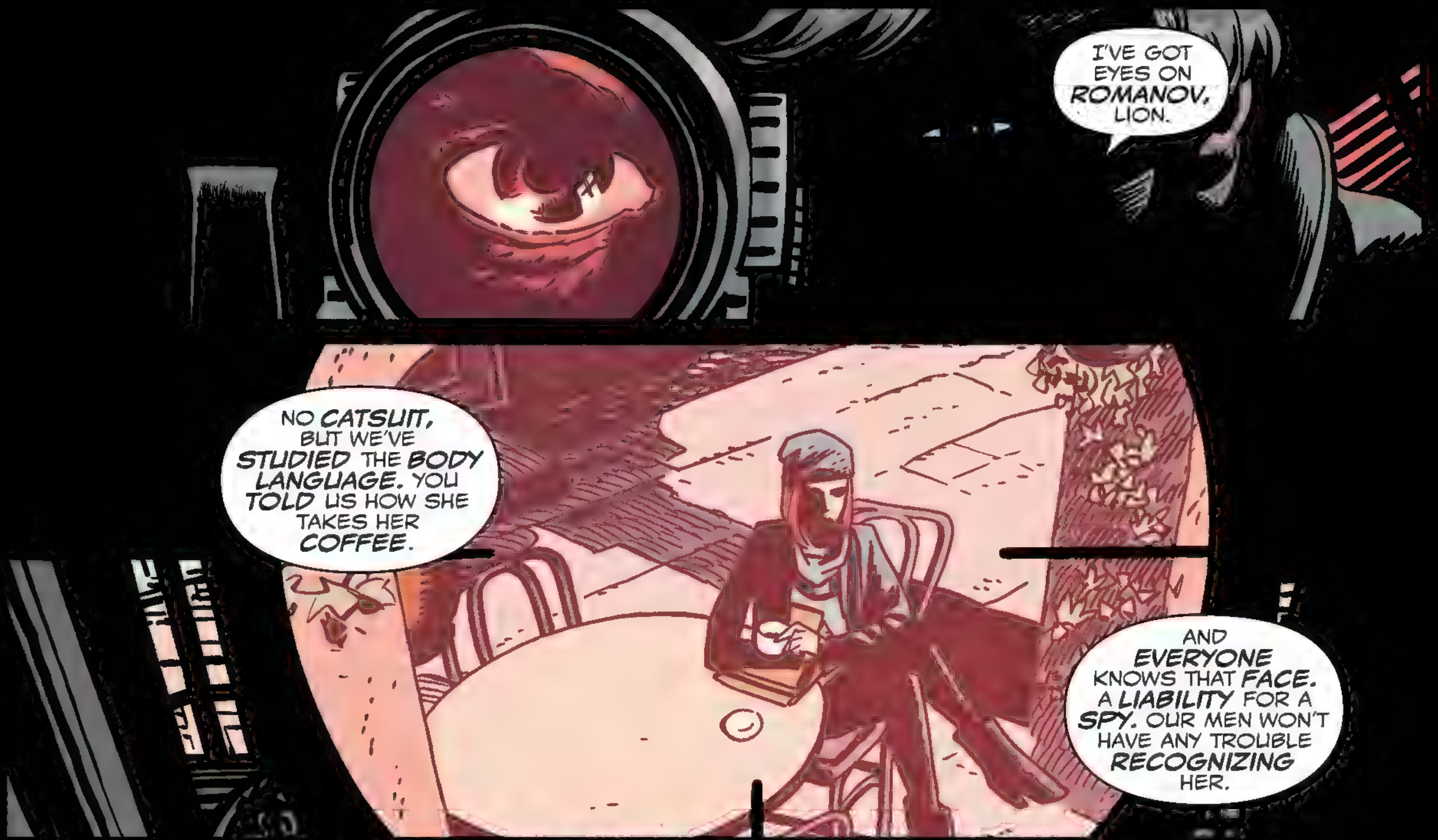
«SEE
YOU **SOON**,
NATASHA.»











I'VE GOT
EYES ON
ROMANOV,
LION.

NO CATSUIT,
BUT WE'VE
STUDIED THE BODY
LANGUAGE. YOU
TOLD US HOW SHE
TAKES HER
COFFEE.

AND
EVERYONE
KNOWS THAT FACE.
A LIABILITY FOR A
SPY. OUR MEN WON'T
HAVE ANY TROUBLE
RECOGNIZING
HER.

BLACK WIDOW



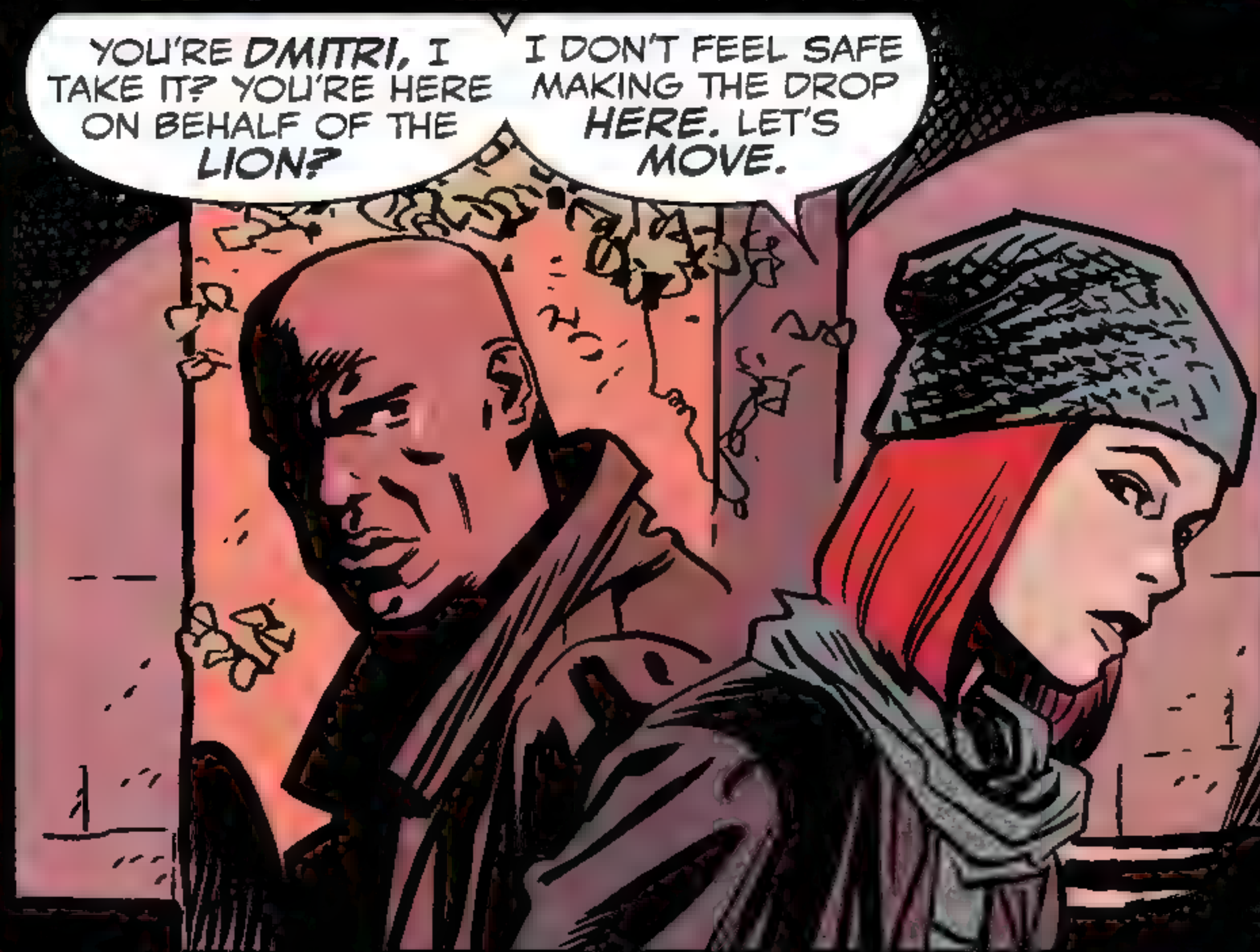
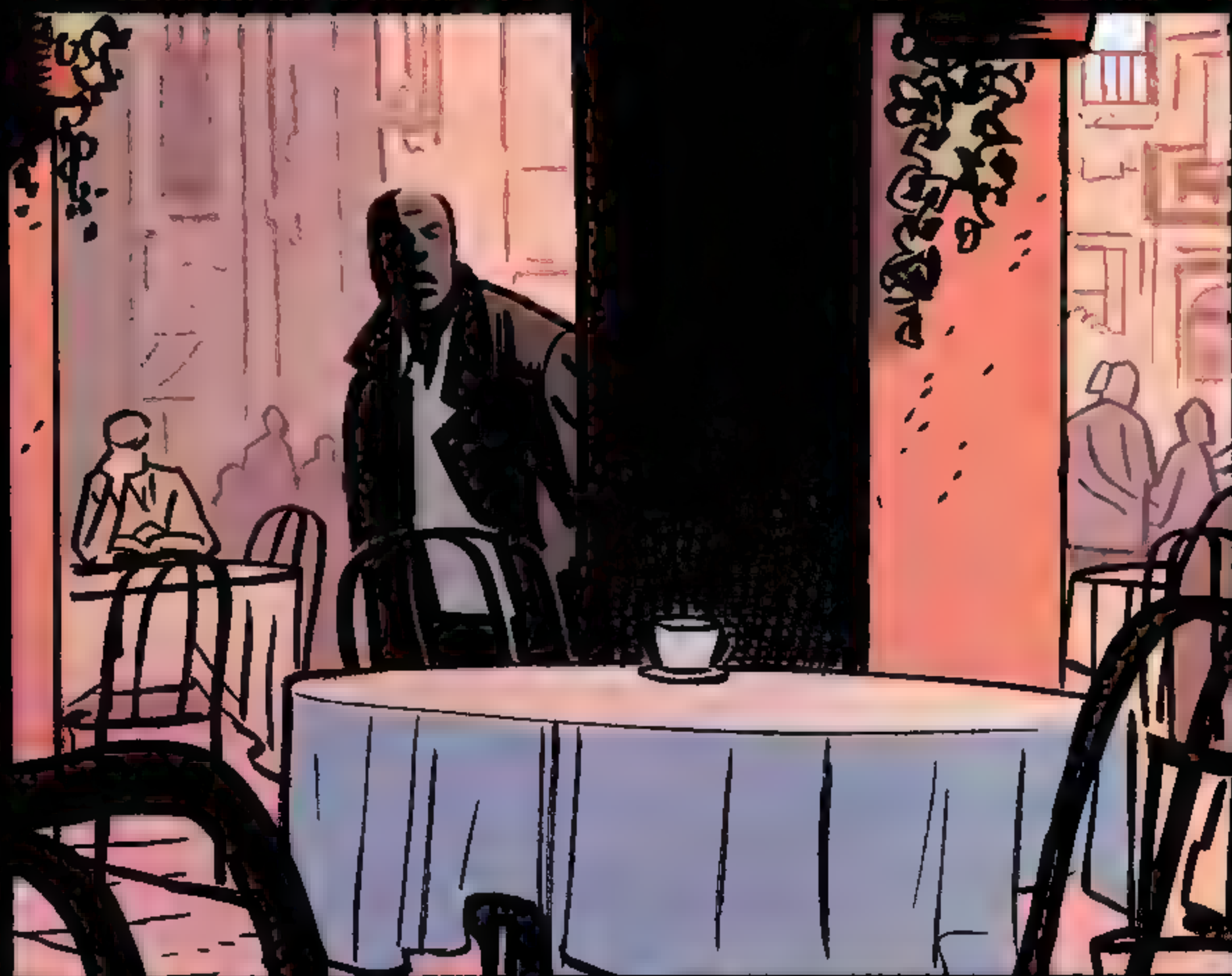
SHE'S IN
MY LINE,
TOO, SIR, BUT--
DID YOU SEND A
DIFFERENT
COURIER?

I DON'T
RECOGNIZE
THIS ONE.



I SEE.
THEN
STRIKE ON MY
SIGNAL.





YOU'RE **DMITRI**, I
TAKE IT? YOU'RE HERE
ON BEHALF OF THE
LION?

I DON'T FEEL SAFE
MAKING THE DROP
HERE. LET'S
MOVE.



UNLESS
I MISS MY
GUESS, WE HAVE
A **S.H.I.E.L.D.**
AGENT ON
OUR TAIL.



S.H.I.E.L.D.'S
GOOD.

NO, I'M JUST
PREOCCUPIED.

THE
PHONER
IN THE BLUE
SWEATER?
THAT'S
TWO.

JUST KEEP
WALKING. I HAVE
A DESTINATION
IN MIND.

PRIVATE.
JUST THE
TWO OF US, NO
ONE ELSE
AROUND.



MUST
BE ONE HELL
OF A PACKAGE
YOU'RE HANDING
OVER. YOU DO
HAVE IT,
YES?

WHO AM
I, HAWKEYE?
OF COURSE
I DO.

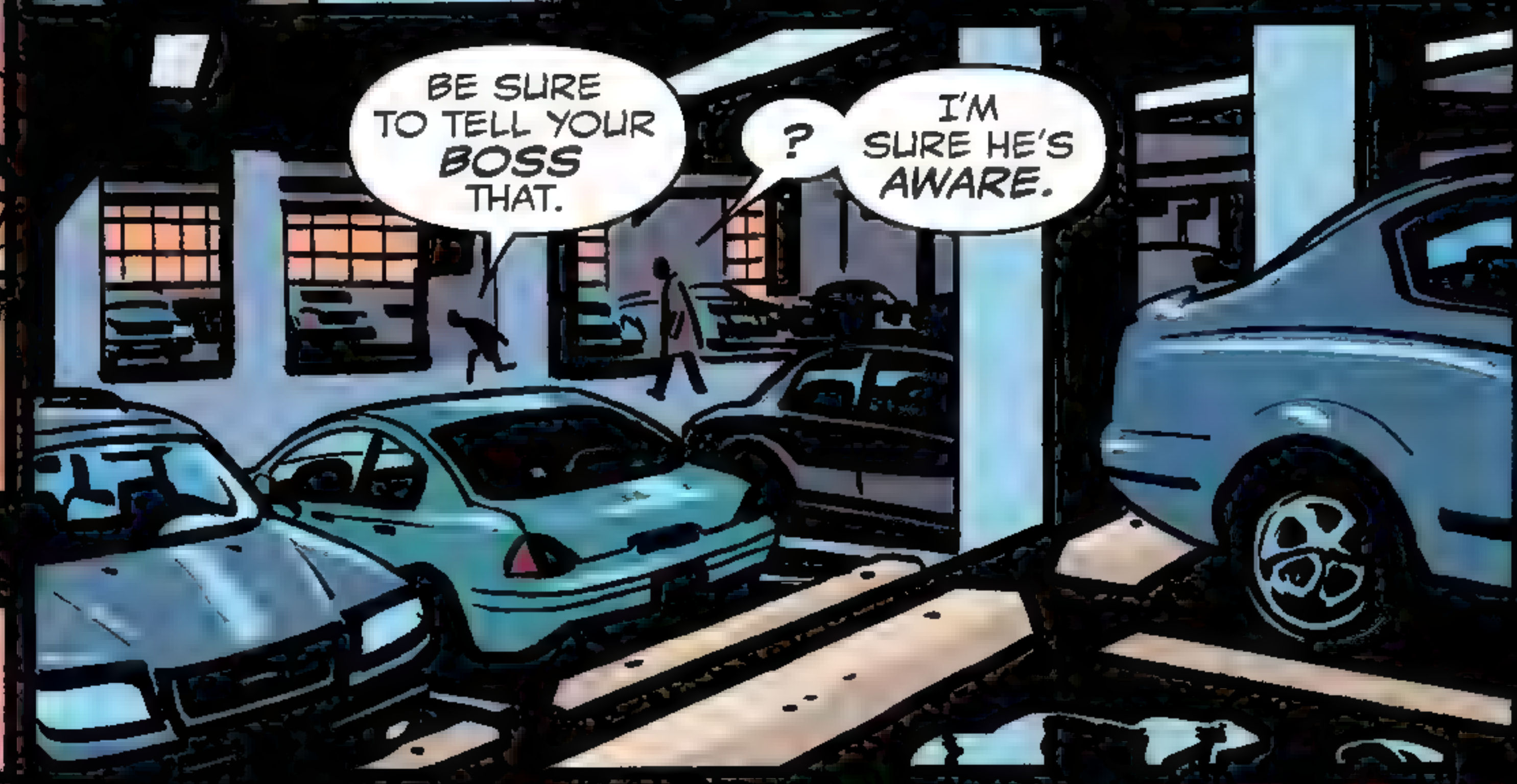
I'M
SURPRISED THE
LION DIDN'T TELL
YOU WHAT TO
EXPECT.



HE
SAYS HE'S
CONFIDENT
YOU'LL PLAY
STRAIGHT
WITH HIM.

NOW THAT
YOU'VE BETRAYED
S.H.I.E.L.D., YOU
NEED **SOMEONE**
IN YOUR CORNER,
RIGHT?







GET DOWN!



DAMN IT. GLIT SHOT, BUT TOO FAR TO THE LEFT TO BE FATAL.

I'VE GOT ONE H.E. ROUND LEFT--

--THEN IT'S UP TO THE GROUND CREW.



AGENT, WE STAY HERE, WE'RE PINNED.

YOU... KNEW...

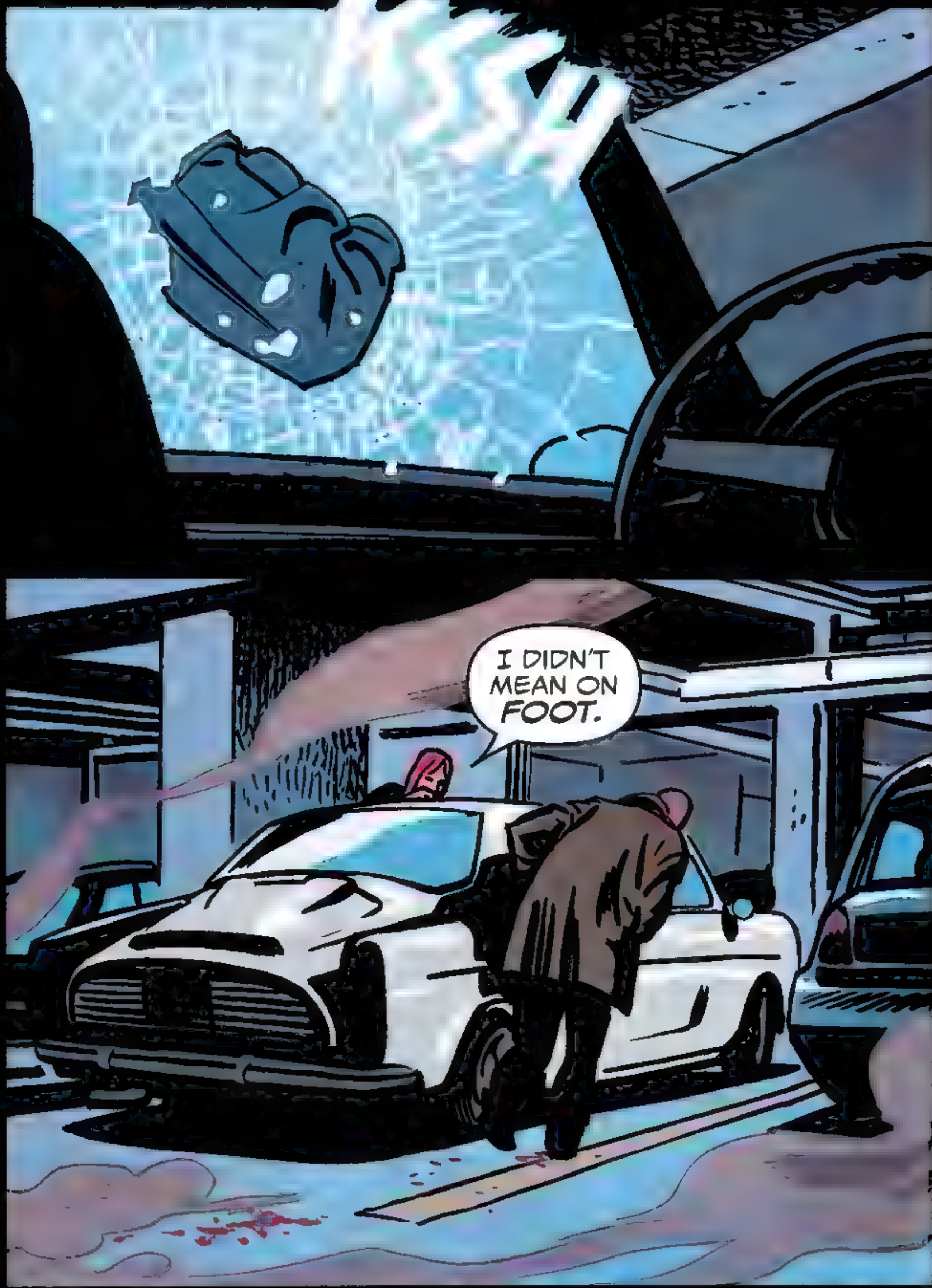
...KNEW I WAS S.H.I.E.L.D.? HOW...?

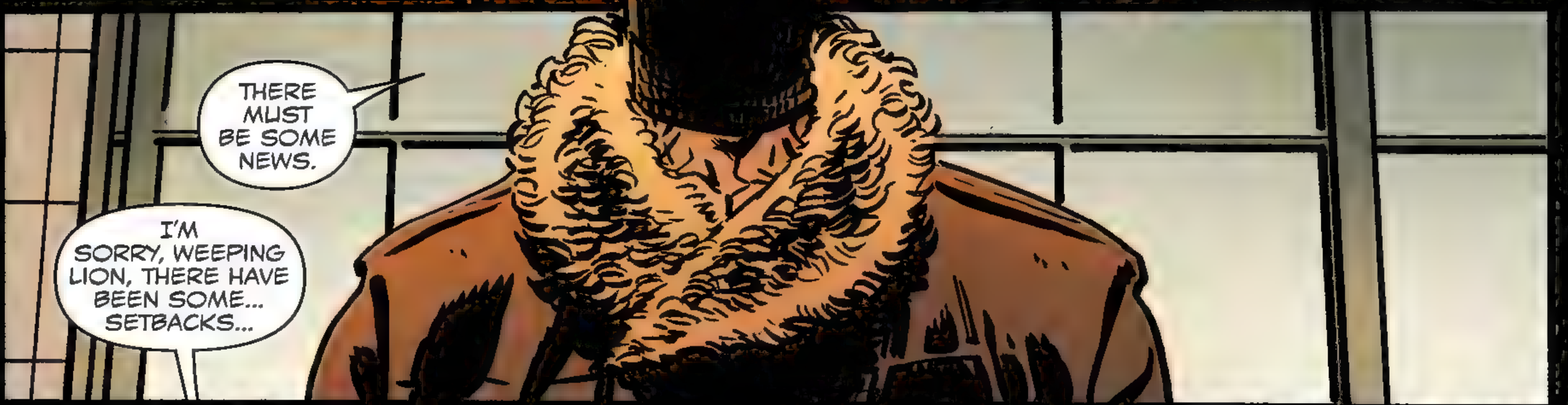


I'M VERY GOOD.

AND I WANTED TO LEAD YOU OUT OF HARM'S WAY. SO FAR, THAT PART ISN'T GOING SO--

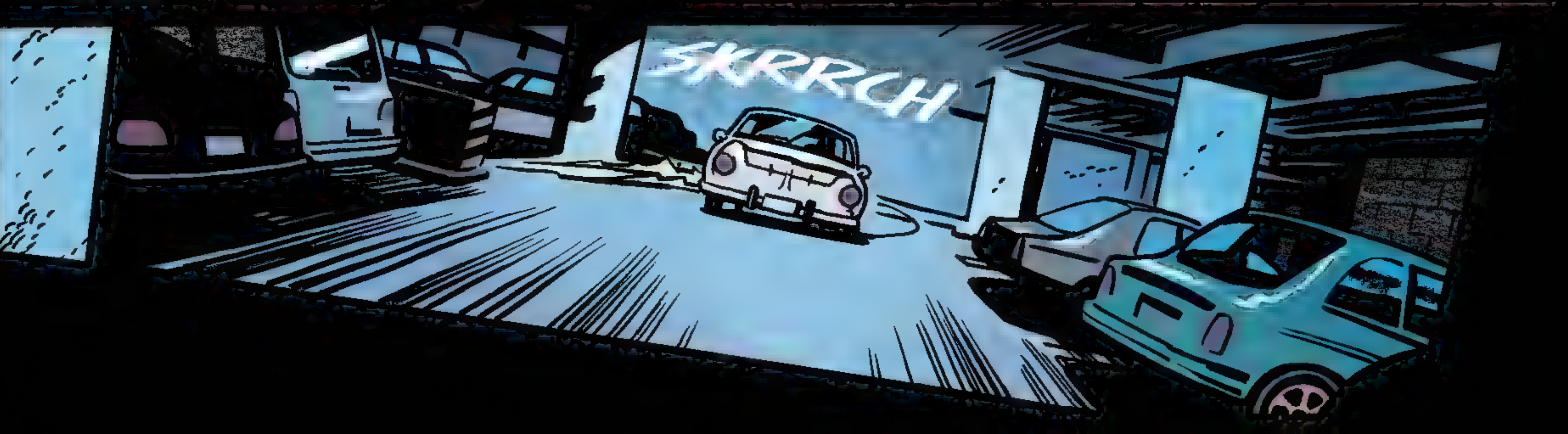




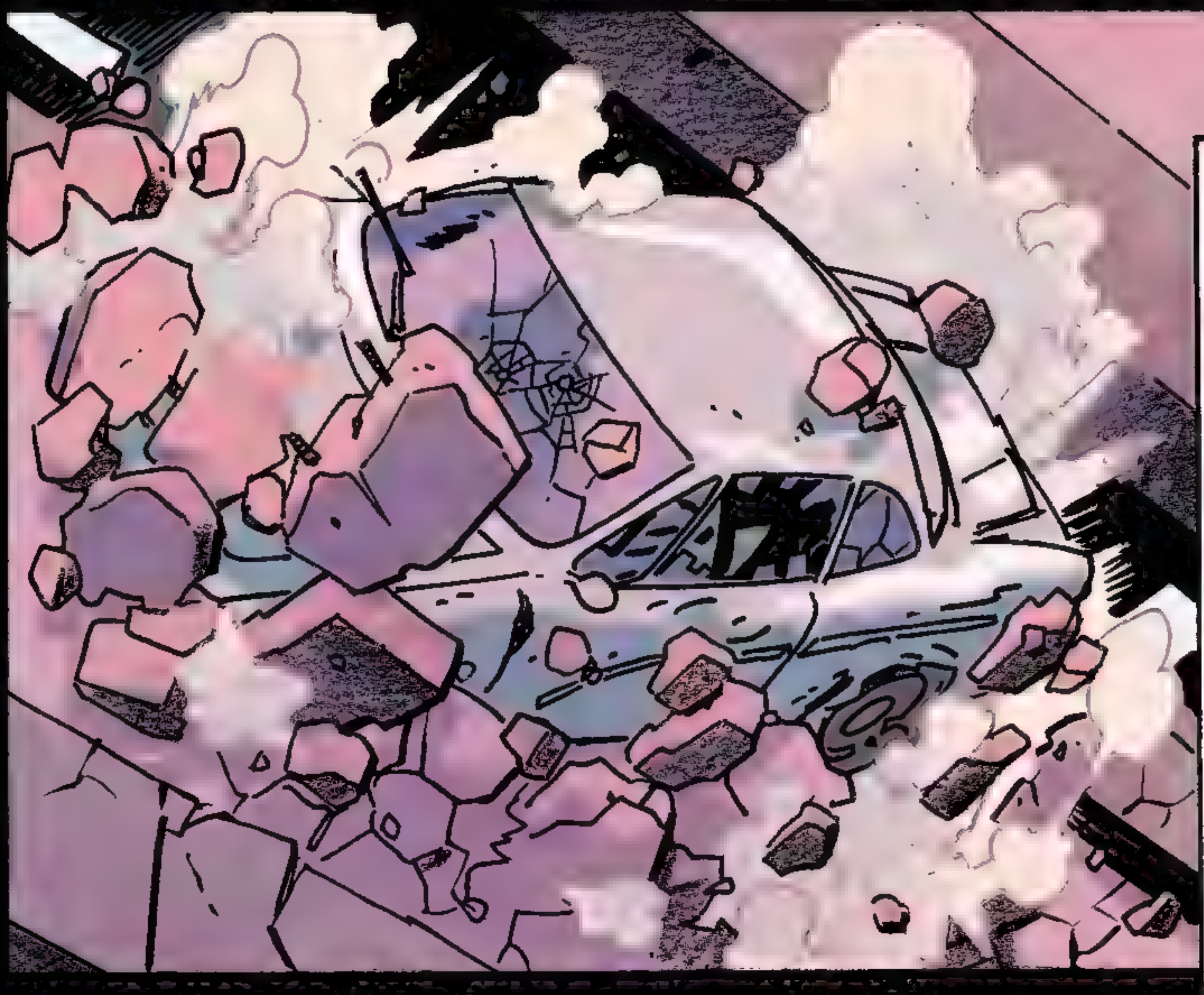


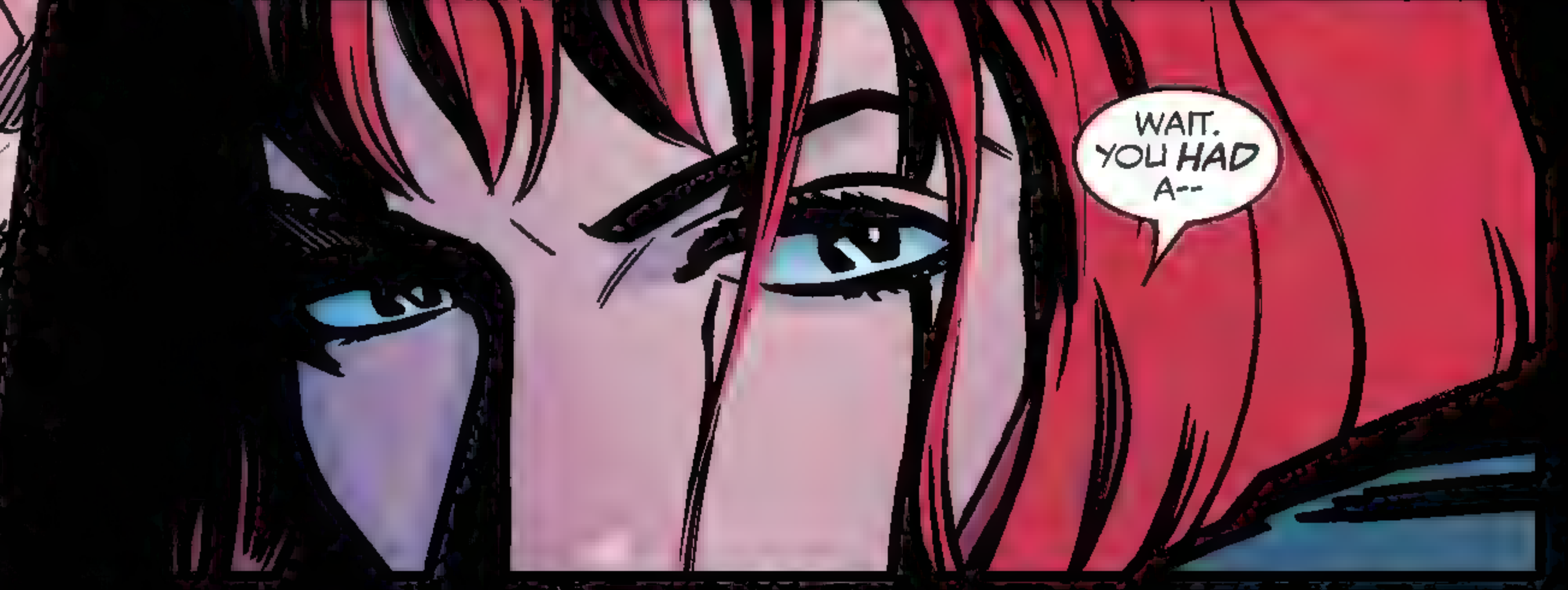
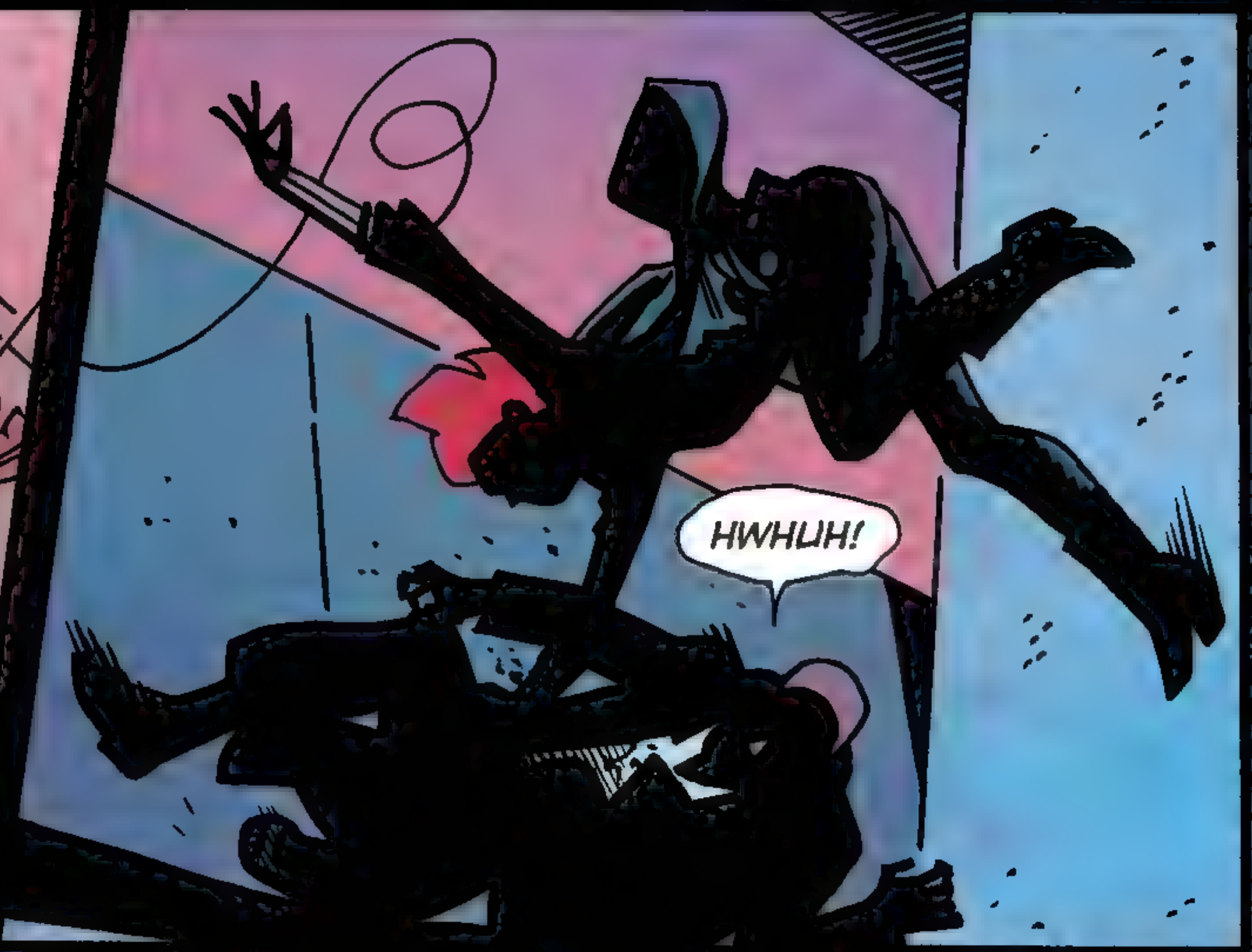














HEY, ROMANOV! WHO YOU GOT RIDING SHOTGUN HERE?

BETTER GET HIM A CORK. LOOKS LIKE HE'S SPRUNG A LEAK.

SERIOUSLY, HOW FAR DID YOU THINK YOU COULD GET? THE LION HAS MEN POSTED ON EVERY STREET CORNER IN A FIVE-BLOCK RADIUS.

HE'S A MIGHTY LION. YOU'RE AN ITSY-BITSY SPIDER. YOU'RE NOT GONNA WIN A FIGHT.



LET HIM GO.



THESE FILES YOU HAVE MUST BE MUY IMPORTANTE. FORK 'EM OVER.



THESE FILES YOU HAVE MUST BE MUY IMPORTANTE. FORK 'EM OVER.



WIDOW...
...SHOW ME YOU'RE STILL ON OUR SIDE

QUIET!



WELL?

WIDOW...
SHOW
ME...

SHUT
UP,
HOSTAGE
MEAT!



TICK-
TOCK,
RED!

...THEY
SAY...YOU'RE
A TRAITOR,
WIDOW...

...WALK
AWAY AND
PROVE
IT...



NOT
PLAYING.
LAST CHANCE.
FILES.



SEE,
OLD MAN?
SHE WASN'T
GONNA LET
YOU DIE.

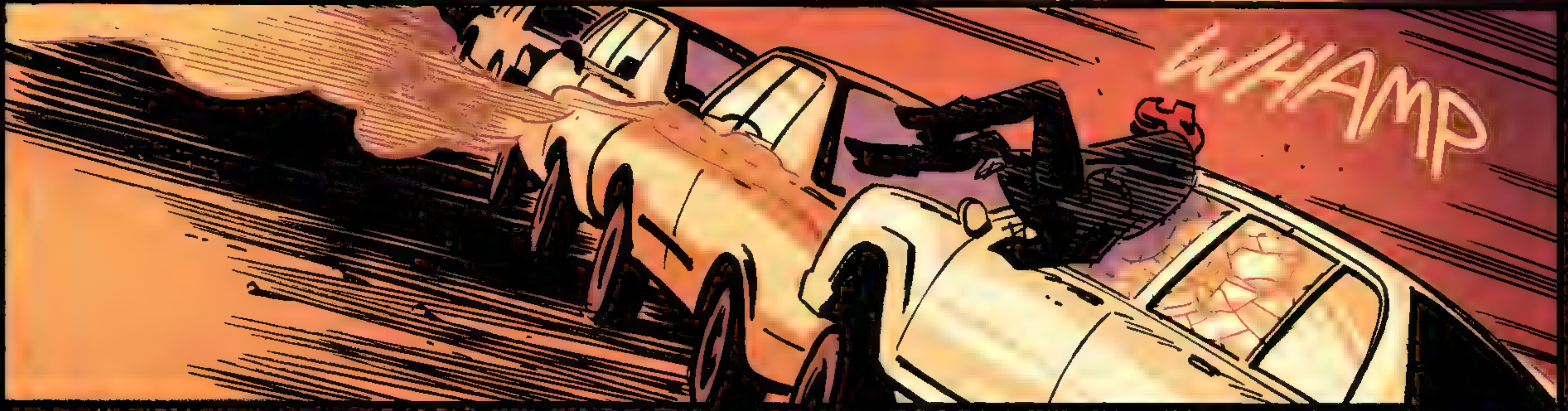
SHE JUST
DIDN'T WANT
TO GIVE UP HER
INTEL! SHE IS
ON YOUR
SIDE!

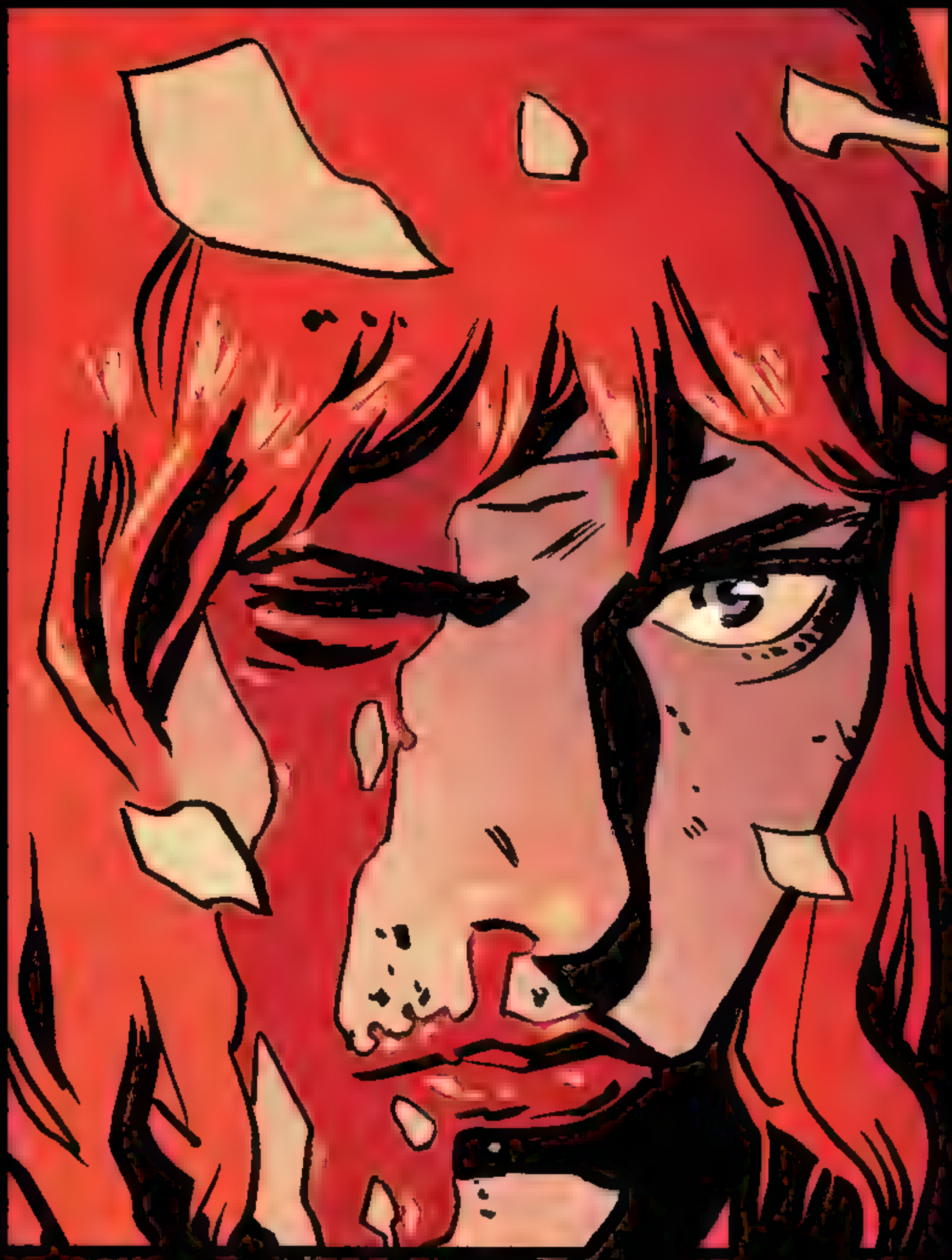
YEAH.
SO IF WE
CAN'T HAVE
IT--

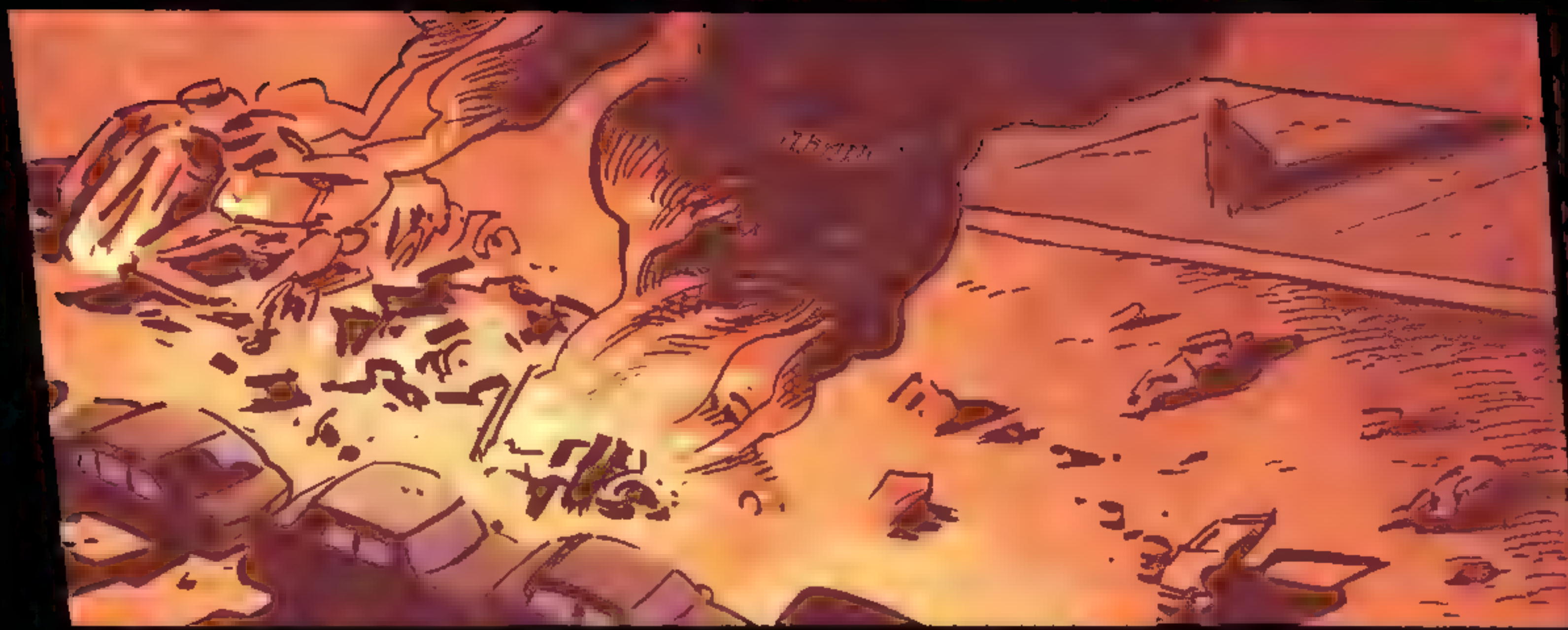


--NO
ONE
CAN!









NOW SHE
BURNS.



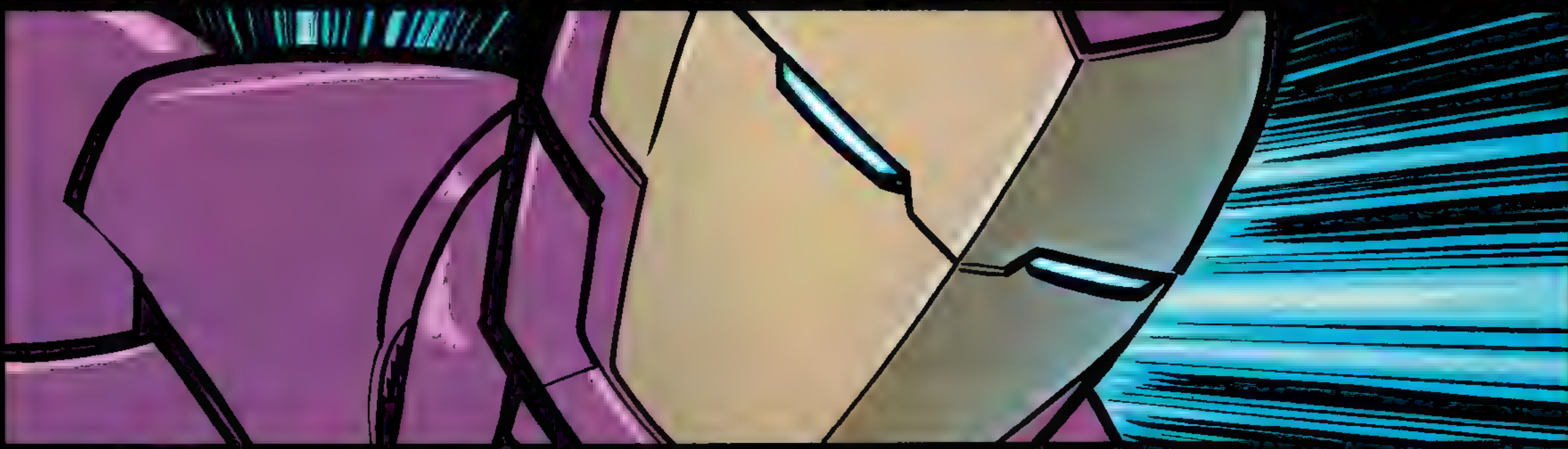
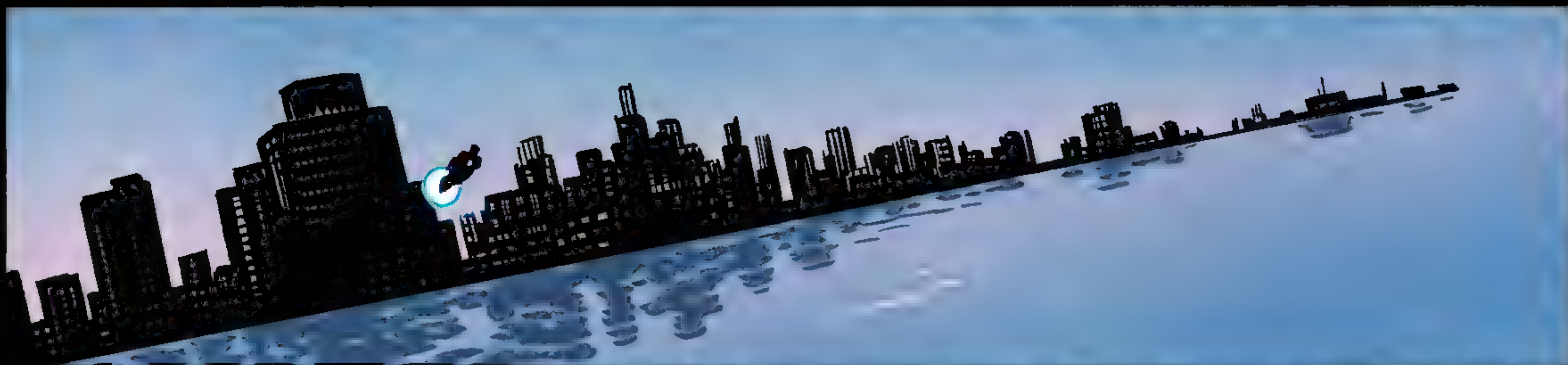
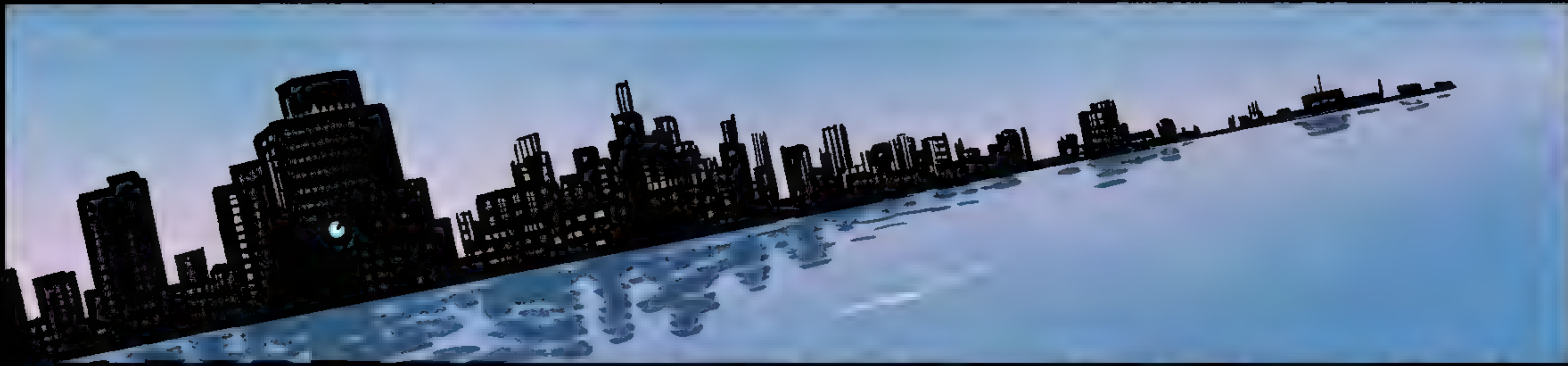
SHE
KNEW THE
CONSEQUENCES
IF THOSE FILES
DIDN'T MAKE THEIR
WAY BACK
HERE.



NOW WE
BROADCAST HER
**BIGGEST, DARKEST
SECRET** THROUGH
EVERY MEDIA
OUTLET ON THE
PLANET.



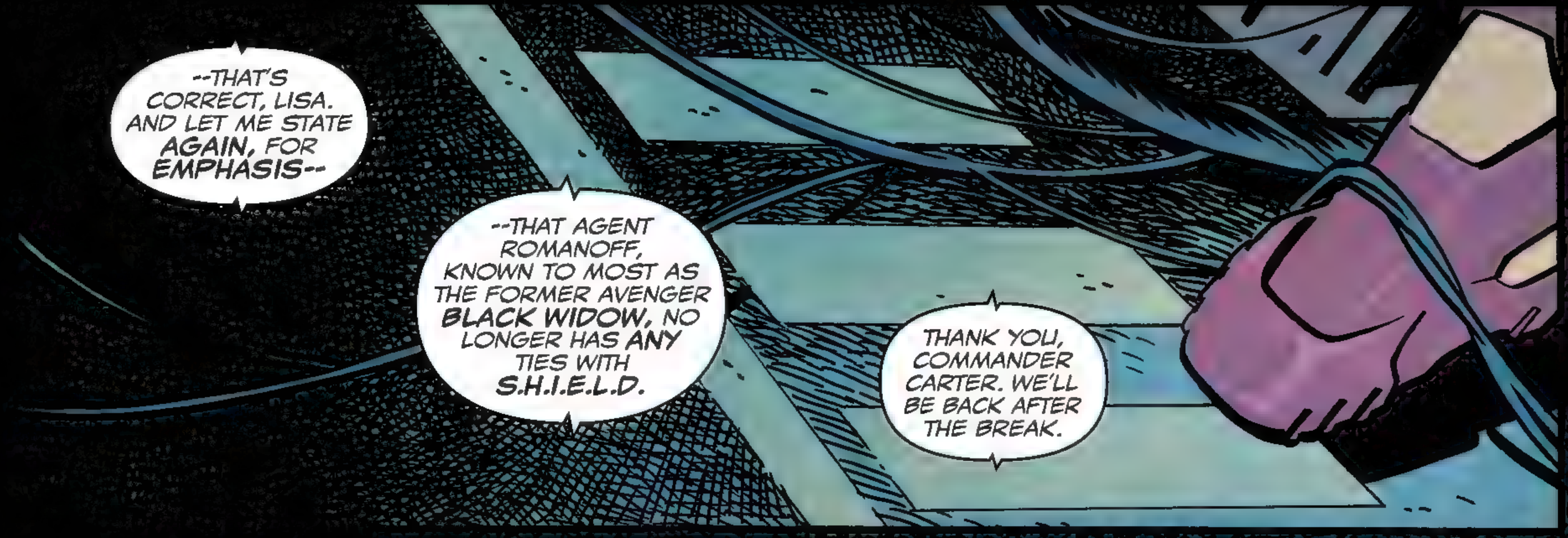
THERE WILL
BE MANY, MANY
PEOPLE FOR WHOM
THAT INFORMATION
WILL BE QUITE
DEVASTATING--



"--STARTING
WITH TONY
STARK."

TARGET:
IRON MAN
IN THE
AIR

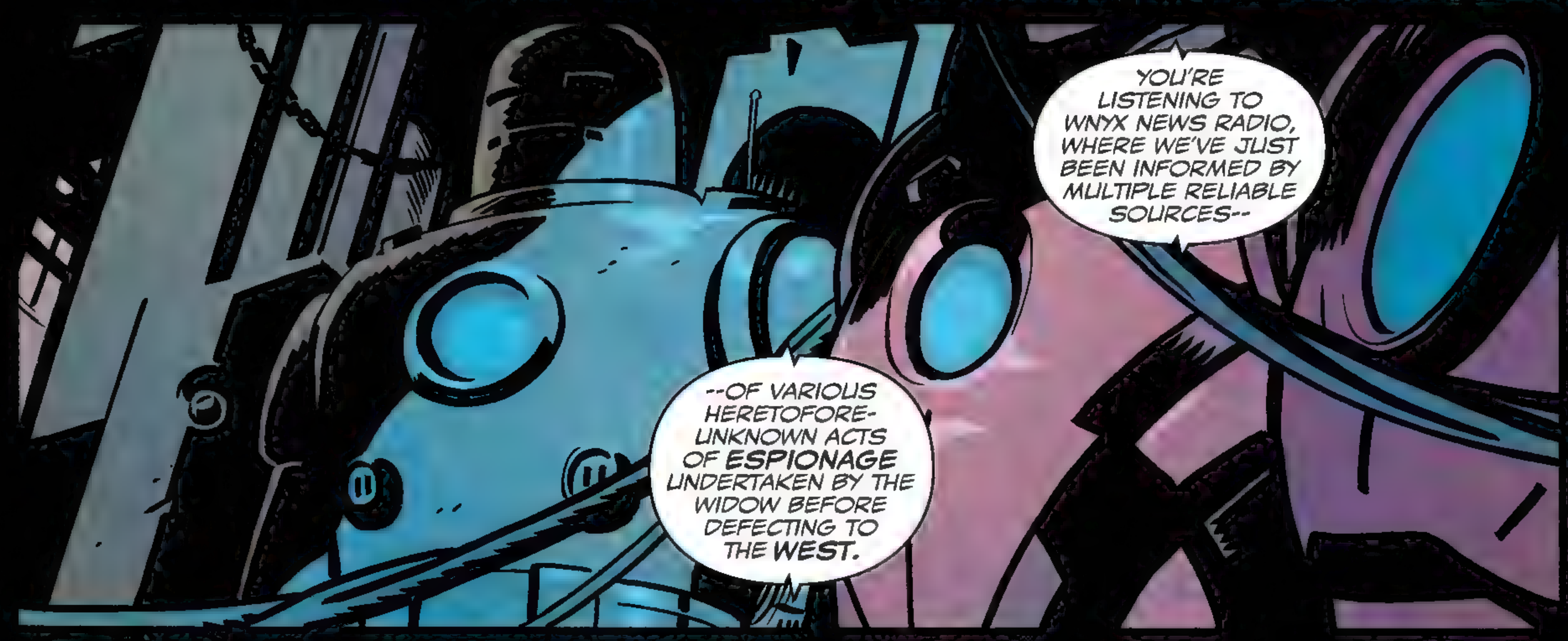




--THAT'S
CORRECT, LISA.
AND LET ME STATE
AGAIN, FOR
EMPHASIS--

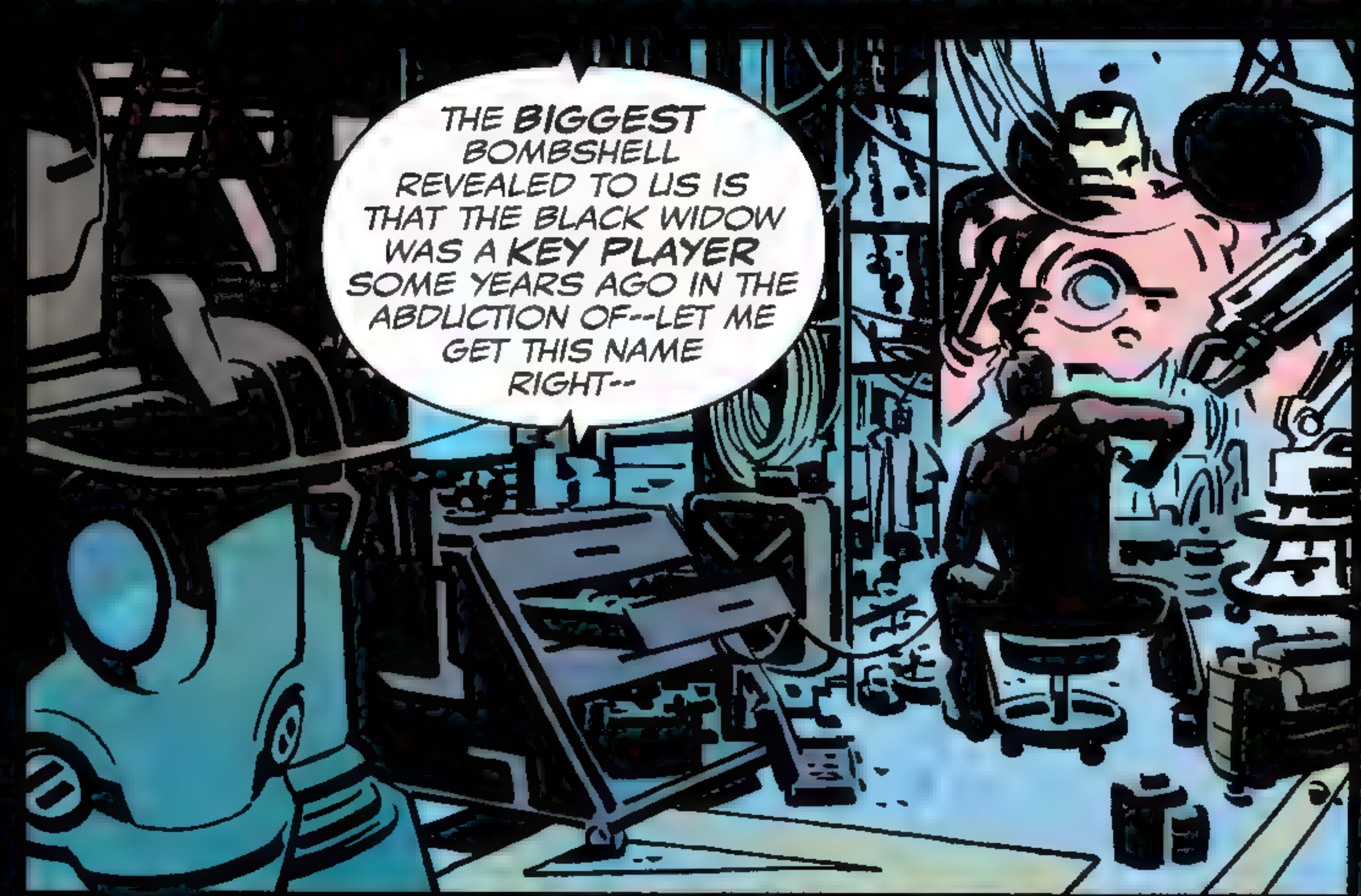
--THAT AGENT
ROMANOFF,
KNOWN TO MOST AS
THE FORMER AVENGER
BLACK WIDOW, NO
LONGER HAS ANY
TIES WITH
S.H.I.E.L.D.

THANK YOU,
COMMANDER
CARTER. WE'LL
BE BACK AFTER
THE BREAK.



YOU'RE
LISTENING TO
WNYX NEWS RADIO,
WHERE WE'VE JUST
BEEN INFORMED BY
MULTIPLE RELIABLE
SOURCES--

--OF VARIOUS
HERETOFORE-
UNKNOWN ACTS
OF ESPIONAGE
UNDERTAKEN BY THE
WIDOW BEFORE
DEFECTING TO
THE WEST.



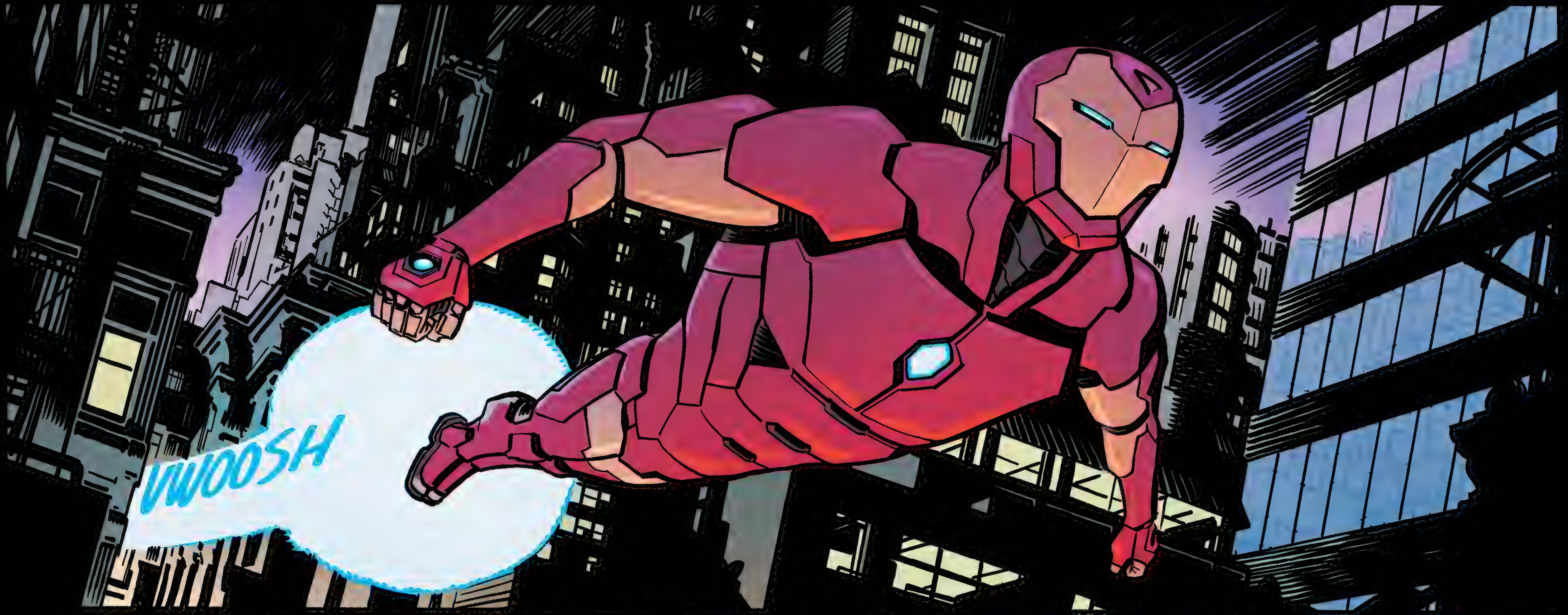
THE **BIGGEST**
BOMBSHELL
REVEALED TO US IS
THAT THE **BLACK WIDOW**
WAS A **KEY PLAYER**
SOME YEARS AGO IN THE
ABDUCTION OF--LET ME
GET THIS NAME
RIGHT--



--PROFESSOR
HO YINSEN--



--THE
SCIENTIST WHO
MADE **IRON MAN**
POSSIBLE BY
GIVING HIS LIFE TO
SAVE **TONY**
STARK.



FRIDAY!
SEARCH ALL
OPEN SOURCES
FOR ANY TRACE
OF NATASHA
ROMANOFF!

TRACKING...

PARIS.

--AND THAT
WAS MY FAILING.
I SUCCUMBED TO
BLACKMAIL TO
KEEP YINSEN A
SECRET.

THE FILES
I LIBERATED FROM
S.H.I.E.L.D. WERE THE
KEY. THEY LED ME TO A
NEW UNDERGROUND
TRAINING PROGRAM
FOR YOUNG RUSSIAN
ASSASSINS--

--THE
DETAILS OF
WHICH I WAS TO
HAND OVER TO A
MAN KNOWN ONLY
AS THE WEEPING
LION.

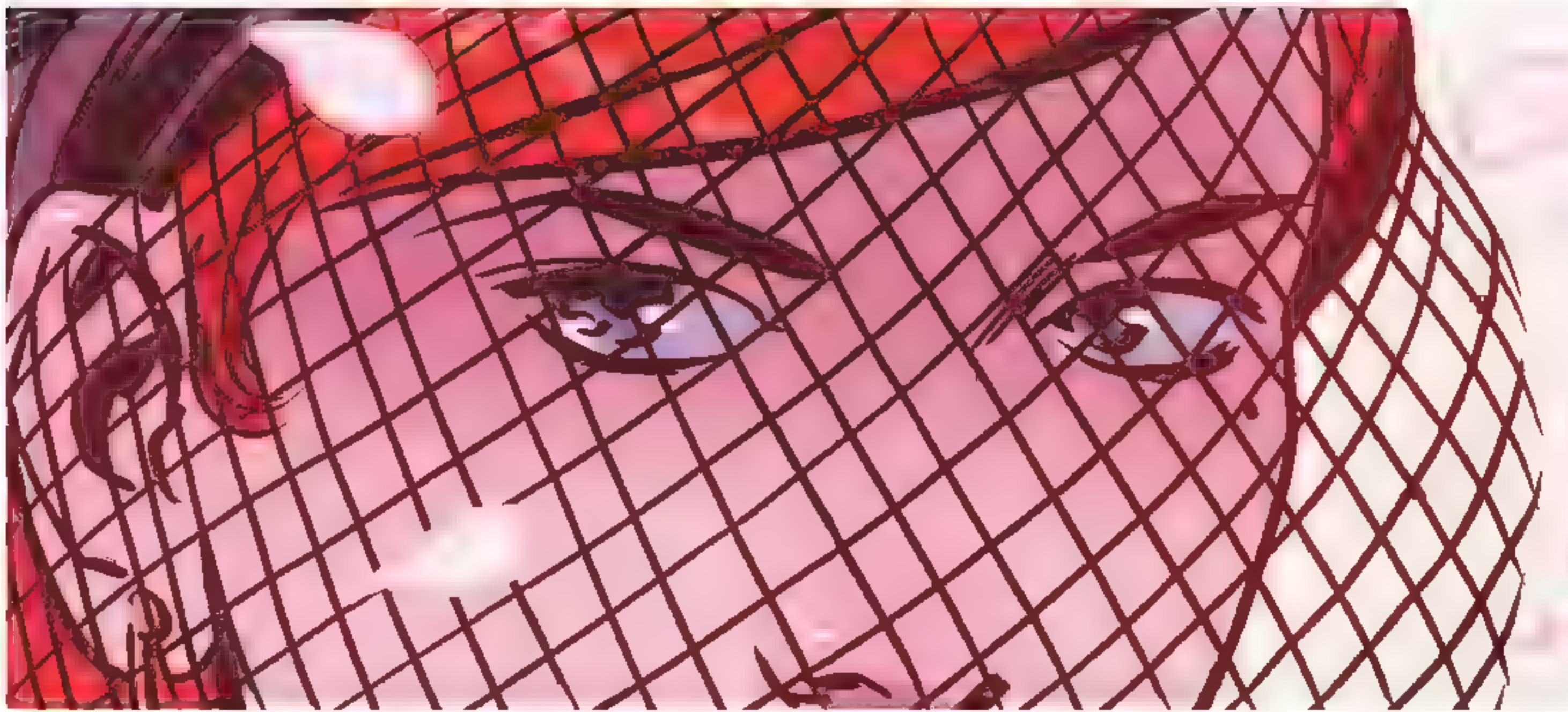
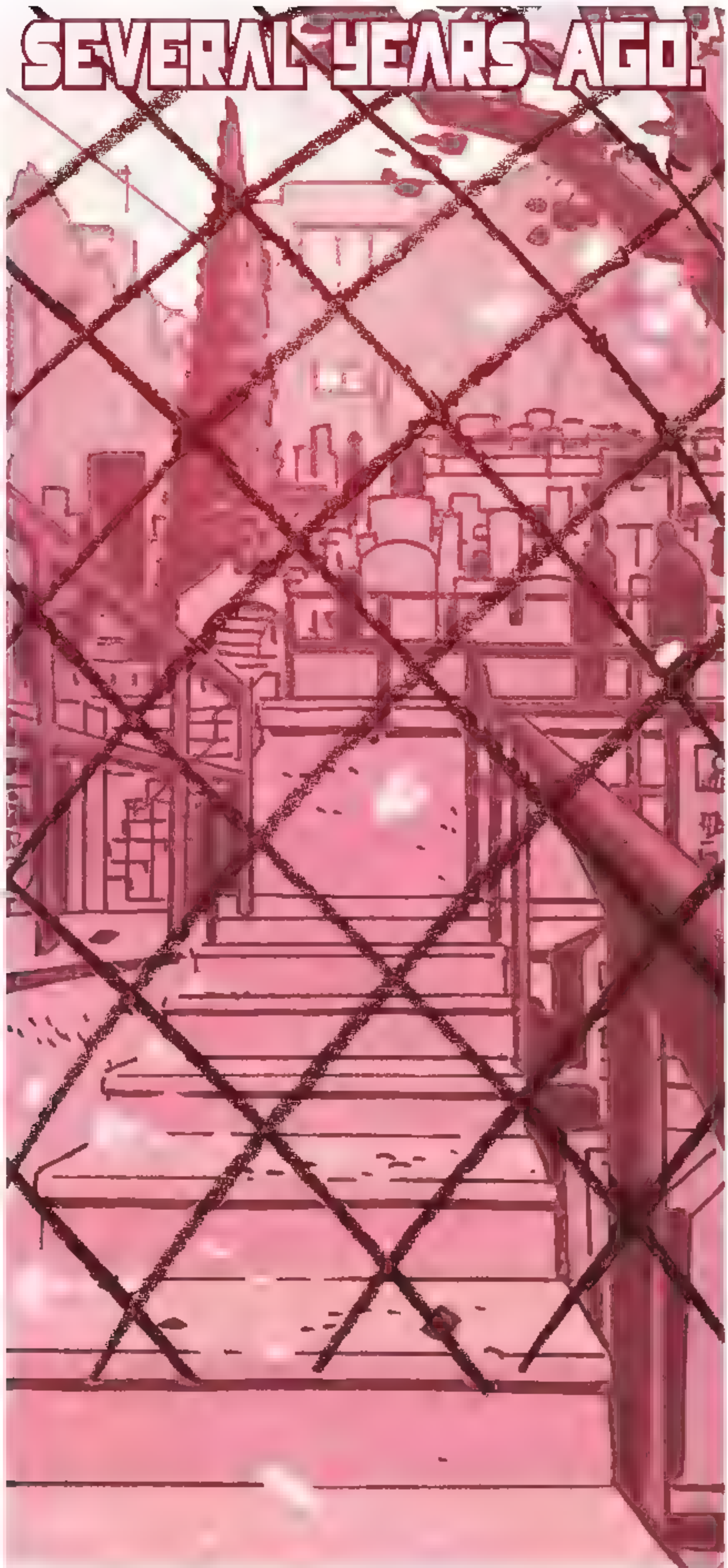
S.H.I.E.L.D.
AGENT ELDER
WAS SENT AFTER ME,
BUT HE--AND THOSE
DETAILS--ARE GONE.
NOW, I'M OUT IN THE
COLD, AND I'M OUT
OF OPTIONS.

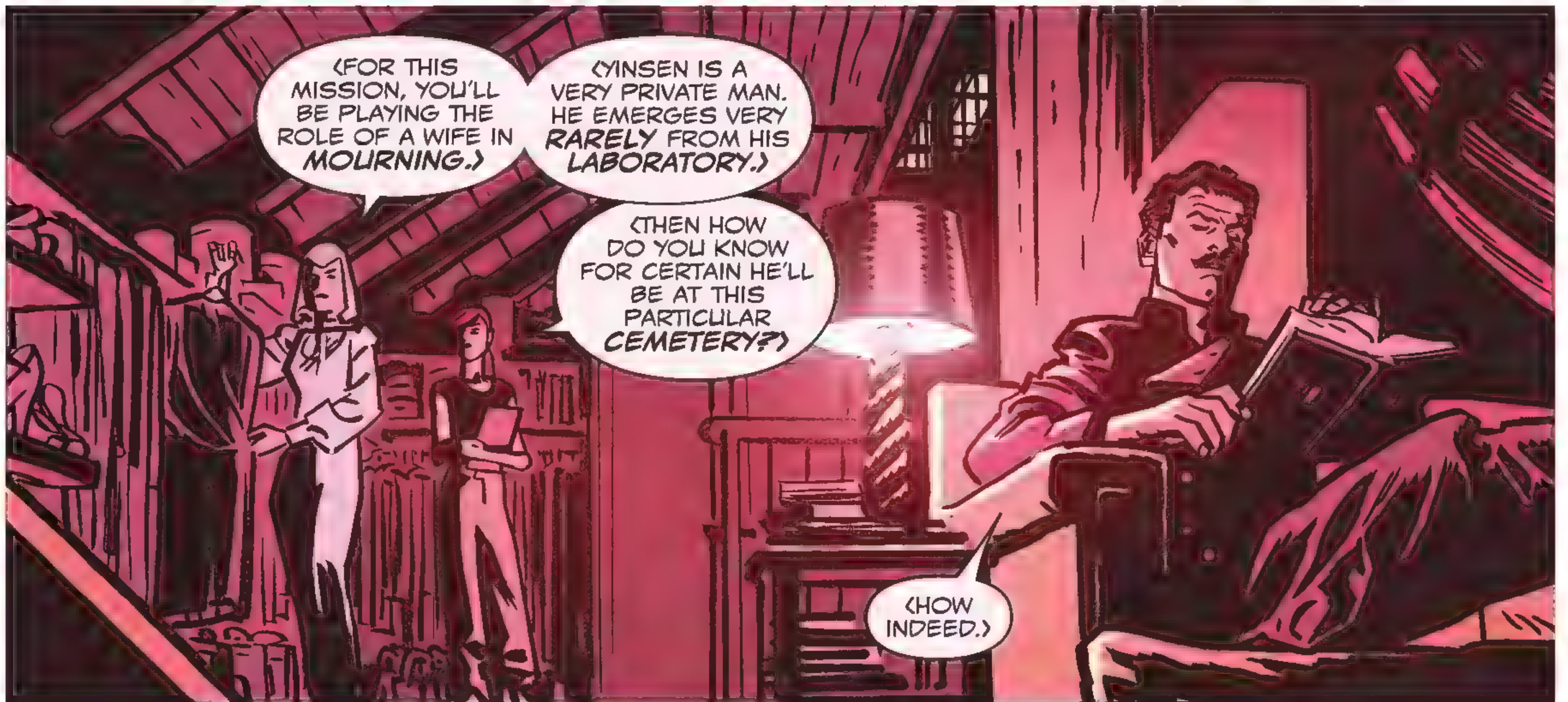
I WAS
HOPING PERHAPS
YOU MIGHT PROVIDE
SOME PLACE TO
TURN--

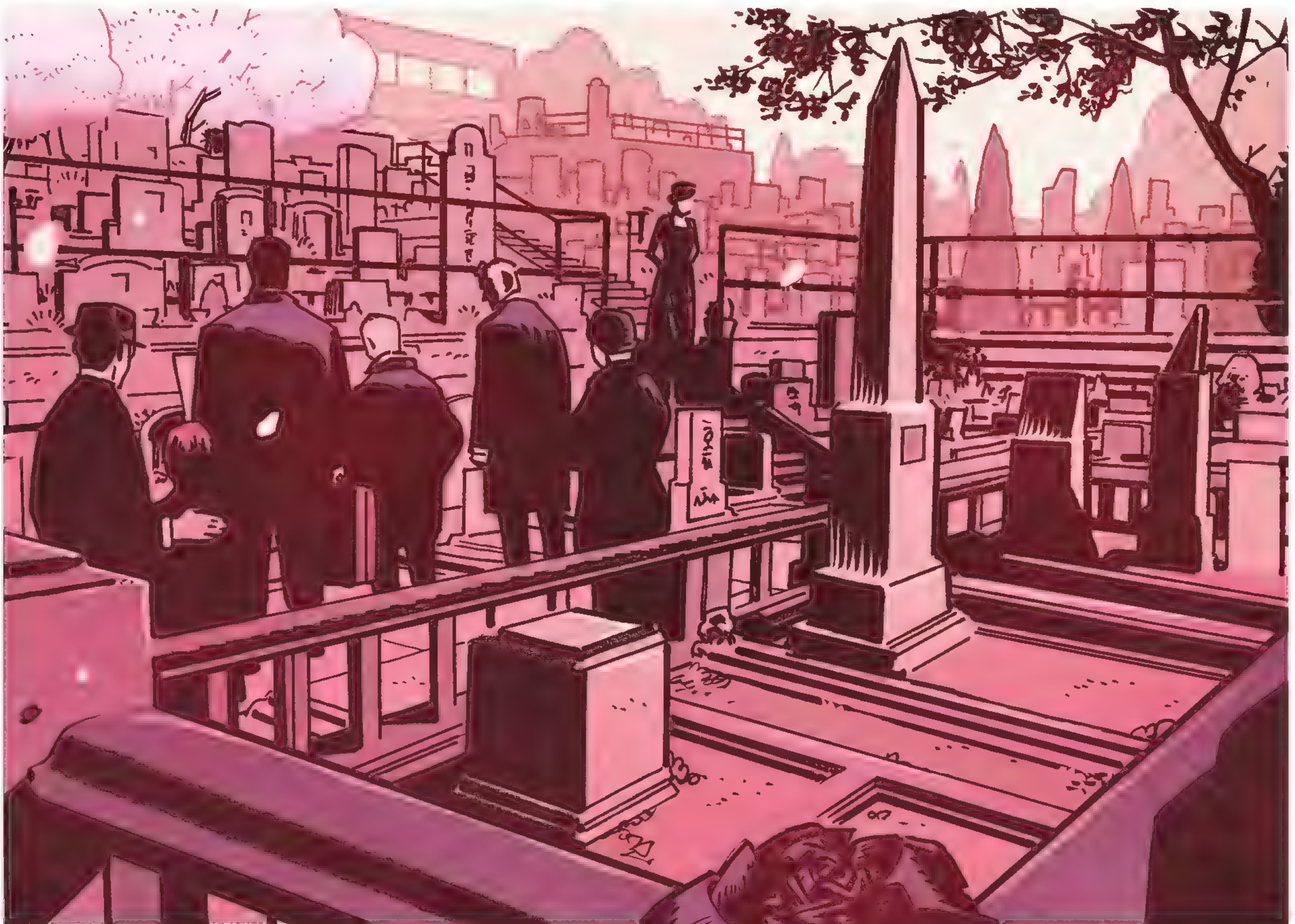
NO, I
UNDERSTAND--

--I
REAP WHAT
I SOW.

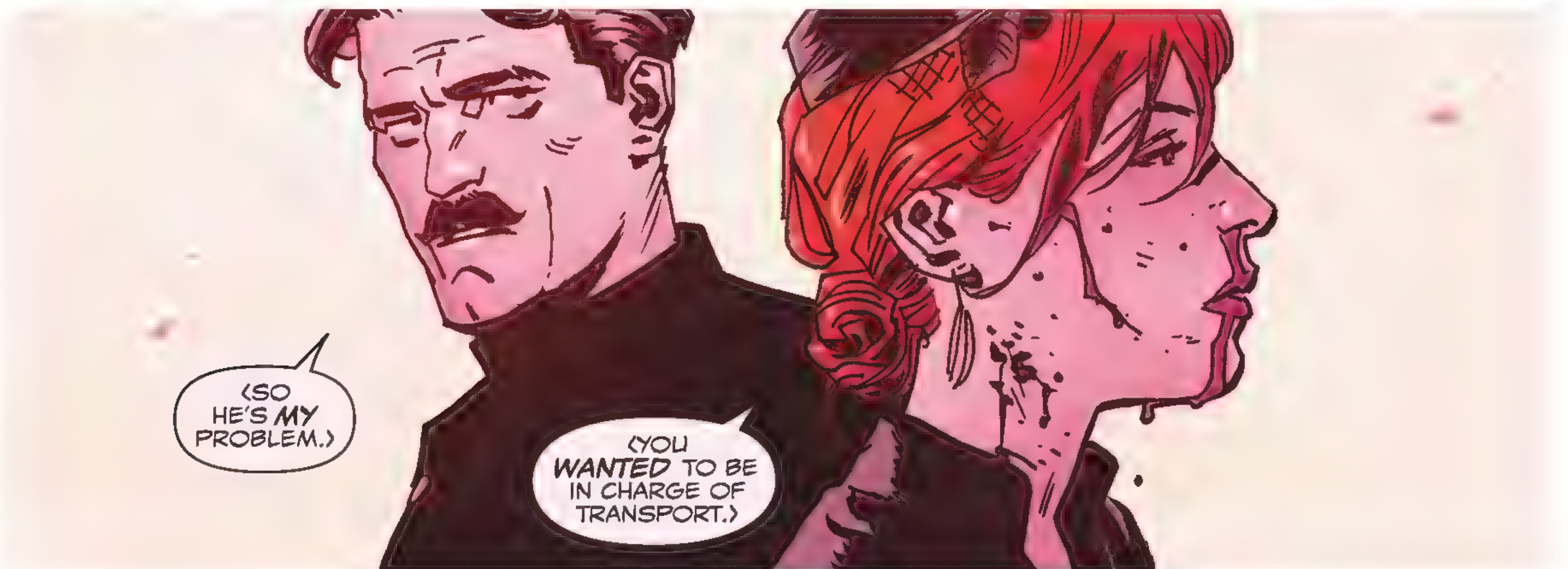
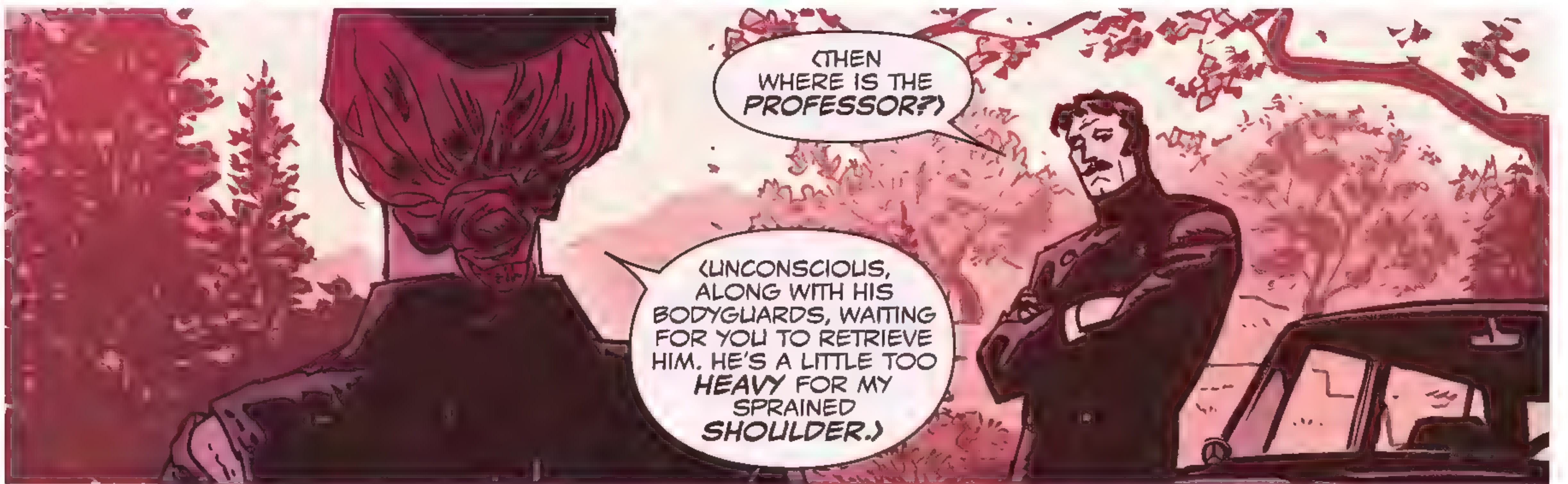
SEVERAL YEARS AGO!















ROMANOFF!

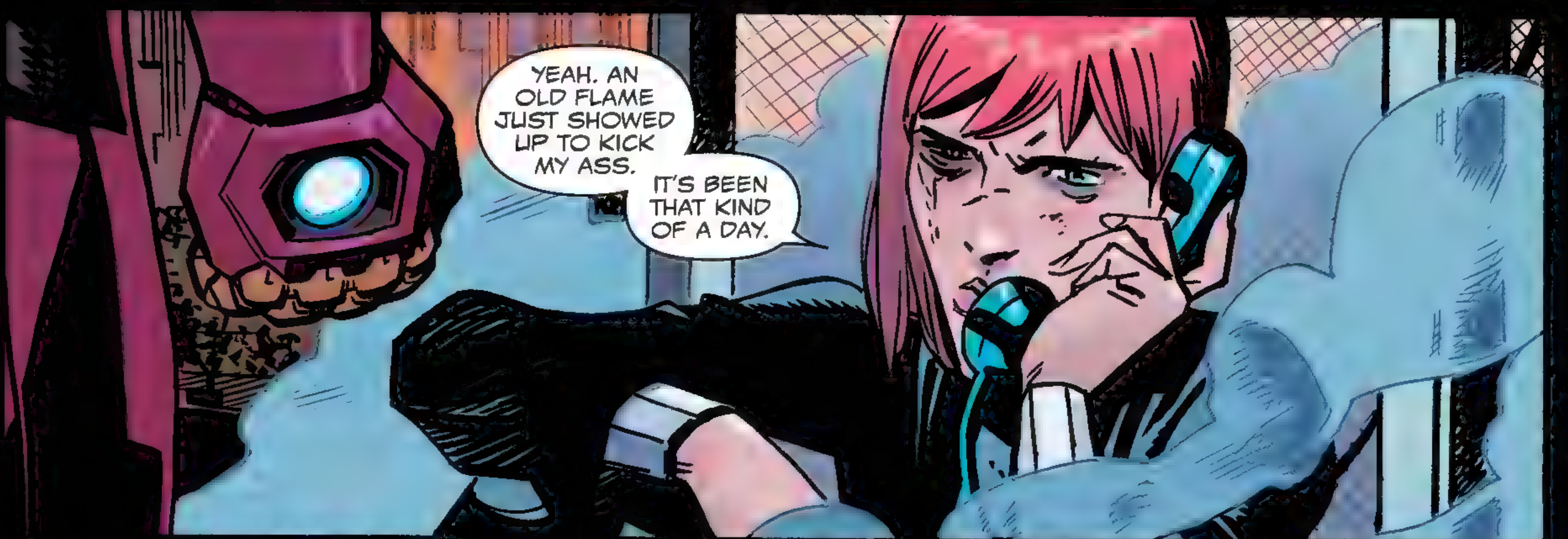
I'LL
HAVE TO
CALL YOU
BACK.



YOU'RE
LOSING YOUR
TOUCH,
NATASHA.

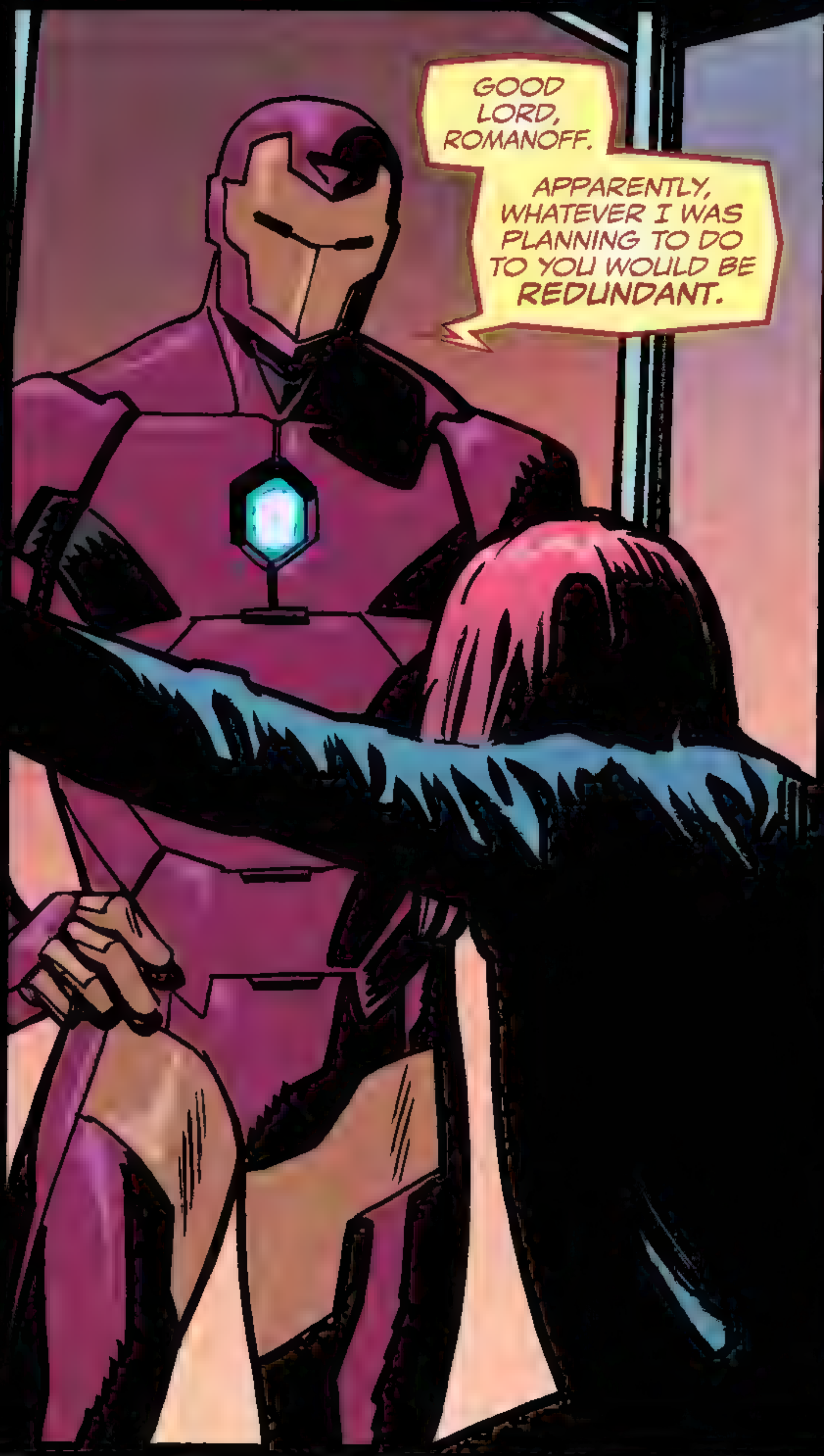
AN
UNENCRYPTED
PAY PHONE?
AMATEUR
HOUR.

TELL ME THIS
YINSEN THING
ISN'T TRUE. TELL
ME. BECAUSE
IF IT IS--



YEAH. AN
OLD FLAME
JUST SHOWED
UP TO KICK
MY ASS.

IT'S BEEN
THAT KIND
OF A DAY.



GOOD LORD, ROMANOFF.

APPARENTLY, WHATEVER I WAS PLANNING TO DO TO YOU WOULD BE REDUNDANT.



DO YOU NEED HELP UP?



WHAT I NEED IS A BOTTLE OF 18-YEAR-OLD MACALLAN.

ANYTHING ELSE?

A BIG GLASS.



TELL YOU WHAT.

THERE'S A STARK OFFICE A COUPLE OF BLOCKS FROM HERE. WE CAN GO THERE AND YOU CAN EXPLAIN YOURSELF...



...AND TRY TO CONVINCE ME YOU WEREN'T RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATH OF THE MAN I OWE EVERYTHING TO.

OPTICAL SCAN
AND VOICE PRINT
REQUIRED.

LE
KNOCK
KNOCK.

ACCEPTED.

WELCOME
BACK,
MR. STARK.

A CHANGE
OF ATTIRE,
SIR?

OLII.

NOTHING
FOR ME?

WHAT
YOU'RE WEARING
ISN'T PROGRAMMED
TO MOLECULARLY
REARRANGE.

STOP
STARING. I
KNOW I LOOK
DASHING.

BESIDES,
IT'S NIGHTTIME
IN PARIS.
WHAT AM I, A
FARMER?

WELL?

IT WAS A
LONG TIME
AGO, TONY. I WAS
A DIFFERENT
WOMAN.

OH, I
REMEMBER.
YOU SENT THE
CRIMSON
DYNAMO AFTER
ME.

YOU
DROPPED A
BUILDING ON
ME WITH AN
ANTI-GRAVITY
RAY.

AND I DON'T
EVEN WANT TO
TALK ABOUT THE PATH
YOU SENT HAWKEYE
DOWN BEFORE HE
TURNED INTO A
GOOD GUY.

AND
OVER THE
YEARS, I HAVE
FORGIVEN
ALL THAT.

THIS
IS A WHOLE
DIFFERENT
MATTER.

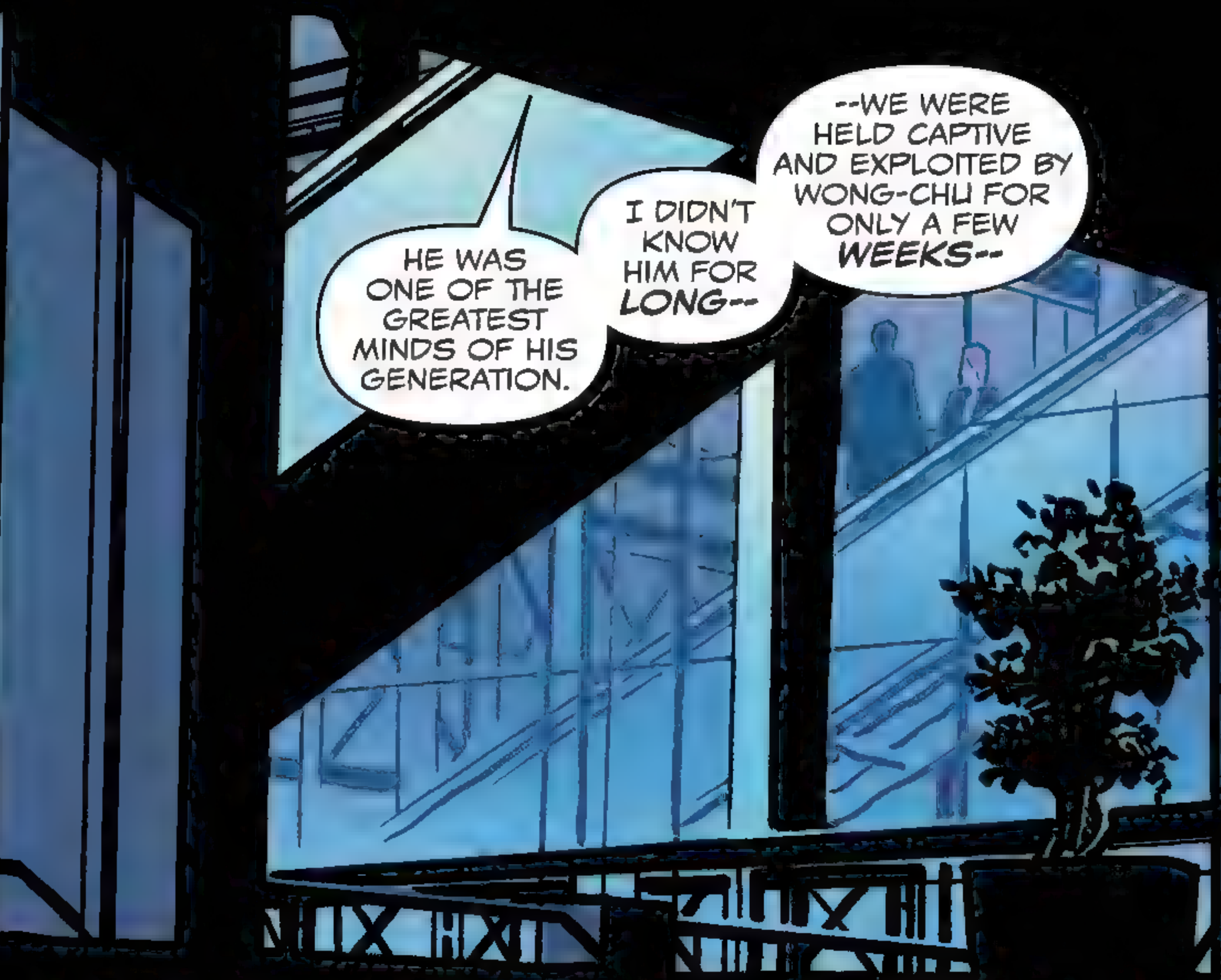


I
REALIZE
THAT.

THAT'S
WHY I
NEVER TOLD
YOU.

YINSEN
MEANT A
LOT TO
YOU.

HE
MEANT A
LOT TO THE
WORLD,
NATASHA.



HE WAS
ONE OF THE
GREATEST
MINDS OF HIS
GENERATION.

I DIDN'T
KNOW
HIM FOR
LONG--

--WE WERE
HELD CAPTIVE
AND EXPLOITED BY
WONG-CHU FOR
ONLY A FEW
WEEKS--



--BUT IT WAS **OBVIOUS** TO ME THAT HIS
GENIUS COULD HAVE CHANGED MANKIND FOR
THE **BETTER** IN WAYS REED RICHARDS OR
BANNER OR I WILL **NEVER** ACHIEVE.

HE HELPED
ME BUILD THE FIRST
IRON MAN SUIT TO KEEP ME
ALIVE WHILE HE WAS MOWED
DOWN BY THE **TERRORISTS**
TO WHOM, IF ALL THIS IS
ACCURATE, YOU
DELIVERED HIM.



I
REGRET
THAT.

YOU
"REGRET"---?



SO IT IS
TRUE?

AAAAH!



...
SUDDENLY,
I'M PUNCHING
DOWN.



IT'S
FINE.

'TASHA--



I SAID,
IT'S FINE. IS
THERE SOMEWHERE
I CAN SIT DOWN
FOR A BIT?



I HAVE A
PULLOUT SOFA IN
MY OFFICE FOR...
SLEEPOVERS.

NATURALLY.

PARISIAN
WOMEN, NATASHA.
THEY APPRECIATE
A NICE **TUXEDO.**
HARDLY MY
FAULT.



ONE MOMENT,
SIR. PLEASE APPROVE
BODY SCANS BEFORE
PROCEEDING.

PERVERT.

IT'S TO
SCREEN OUT THE
SEXY ASSASSINS
HIDING WEAPONS,
OKAY? YOU OF ALL
PEOPLE SHOULD
APPRECIATE
THAT.



SCANNING
COMPLETE.
YOU MAY
ENTER.



FULL
BIOSCAN,
SEE?

HUH.
THAT'S
STRANGE.

IT SHOULD
BE HIGHLIGHTING
YOUR **WOUNDS**,
BUT ALL IT SHOWS
IS A FEW MINOR
SCRAPES--



KKKKTTT--!



MAKEUP
AND **ACTING**,
TONY.

YOU'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
A **SUCKER** FOR
BOTH.

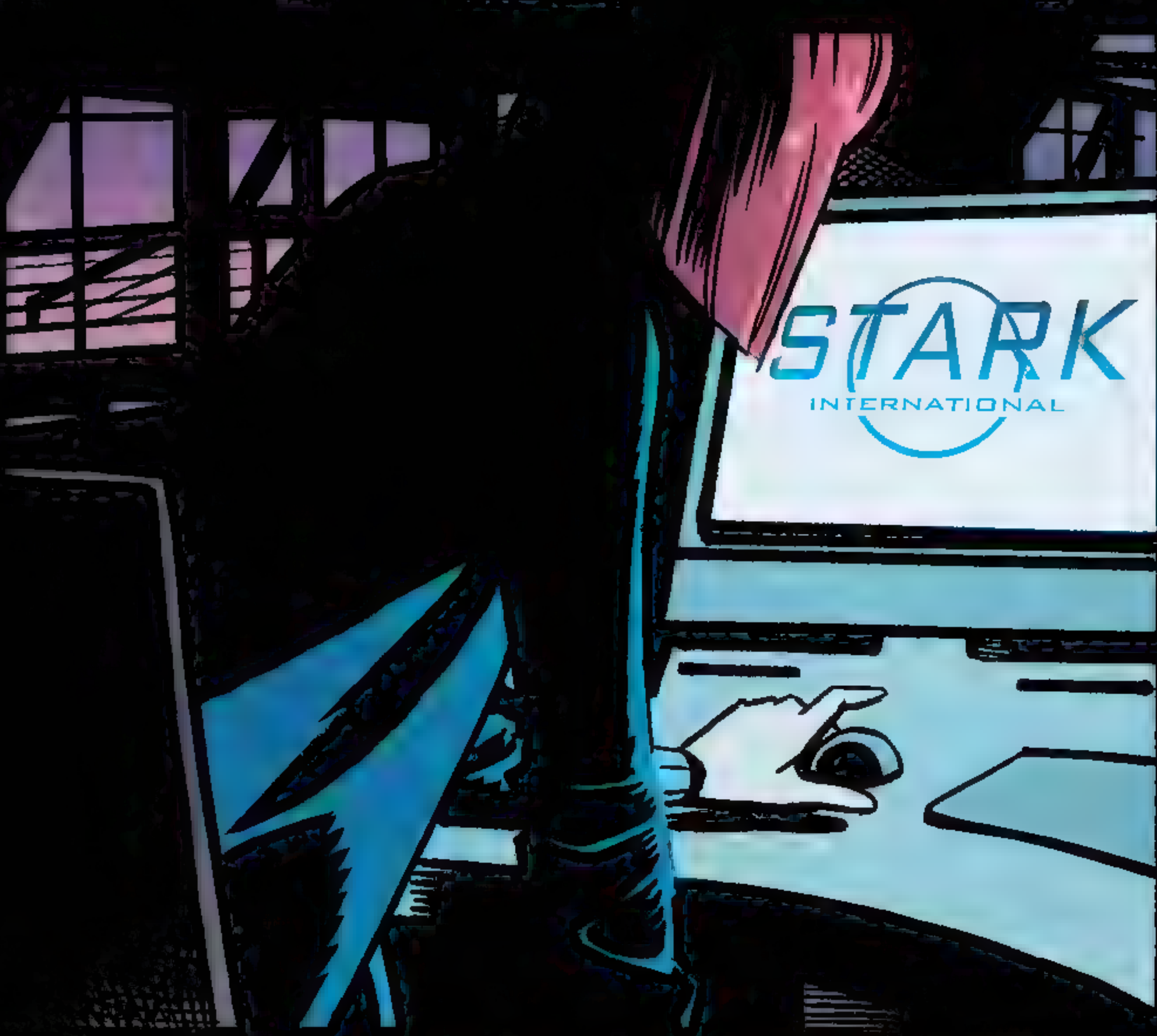
THANKS
FOR THE
ACCESS.



"AMATEUR HOUR," HE SAYS.

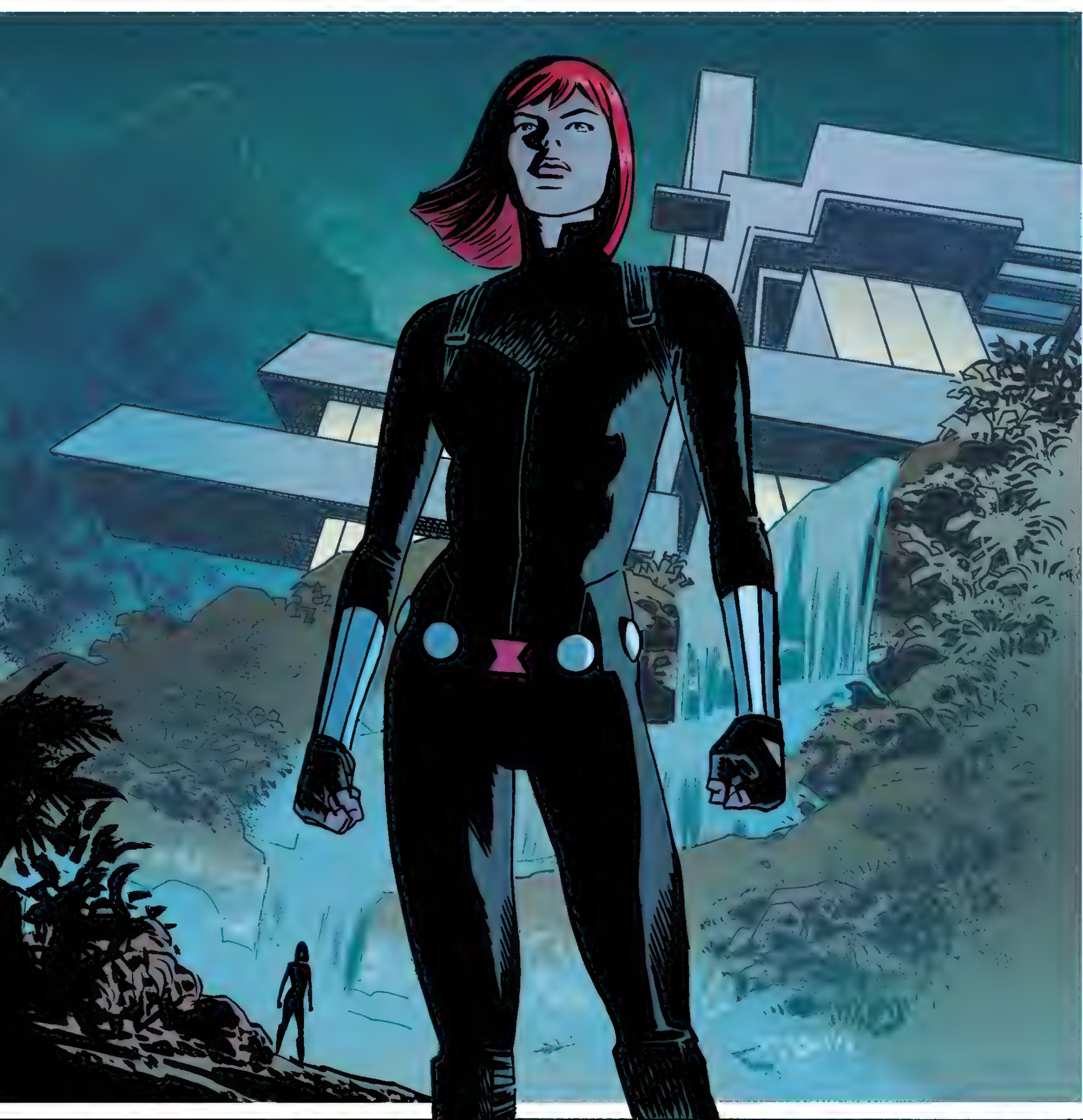
LIKE I DIDN'T KNOW HE COULD TRACK A PAY PHONE CALL.

RIGHT NOW, THERE'S A RANDOM PERSON IN THE 212 AREA CODE BAFLED BY AN EXTREMELY LONG VOICE MAIL.



STARK
INTERNATIONAL

STARK
SALES RECORDS QTR 4...
SEARCHING SERIAL NUMBER 052535786...
SHIPPING ADDRESS:





YOU'RE CARELESS WITH YOUR ADDRESS, PLATCH LIEV.



WHEN YOU HAD ME CAPTIVE, I NOTICED SOME STARK SHIPPING CRATES. I MEMORIZED THE SERIAL NUMBER ON ONE.

CHKCHKKT



ZZZZT

ZZZZT



THIS IS POWER,
WIDOW. **THIS IS
CONTROL.**

I COLLECT
SECRETS AND
WEAPONIZE THEM.
CALL ME THE **ANTI-
SNOWDEN**,
I SUPPOSE.

I DON'T
GATHER INTEL FOR
TRANSPARENCY,
TO EXPOSE THE
BAD GUYS.

I DO IT TO
MANIPULATE.
TO ALWAYS MAKE
SURE THE CARDS
ARE STACKED IN
MY **FAVOR.**

BUT YOU
COULDN'T GET TO
THE **HEADMISTRESS**
OF THE **RED ROOM**
TO FIND DETAILS ON
HER ADOLESCENT-
TERRORIST
PROGRAM.

SO YOU
GOADED **ME** INTO
STEALING RECORDS.
SORRY TO **DISAPPOINT.**
YOU PLAYED YOUR **ACE.**
NOW YOU HAVE
NO MORE **HOLD**
OVER ME.

OH, DON'T
IF YOUR BRAIN
IS **FULL** OF DARK
KNOWLEDGE,
NATASHA.

MY **HOLD**
OVER YOU
WILL **NEVER**
CEASE.

ENOUGH.

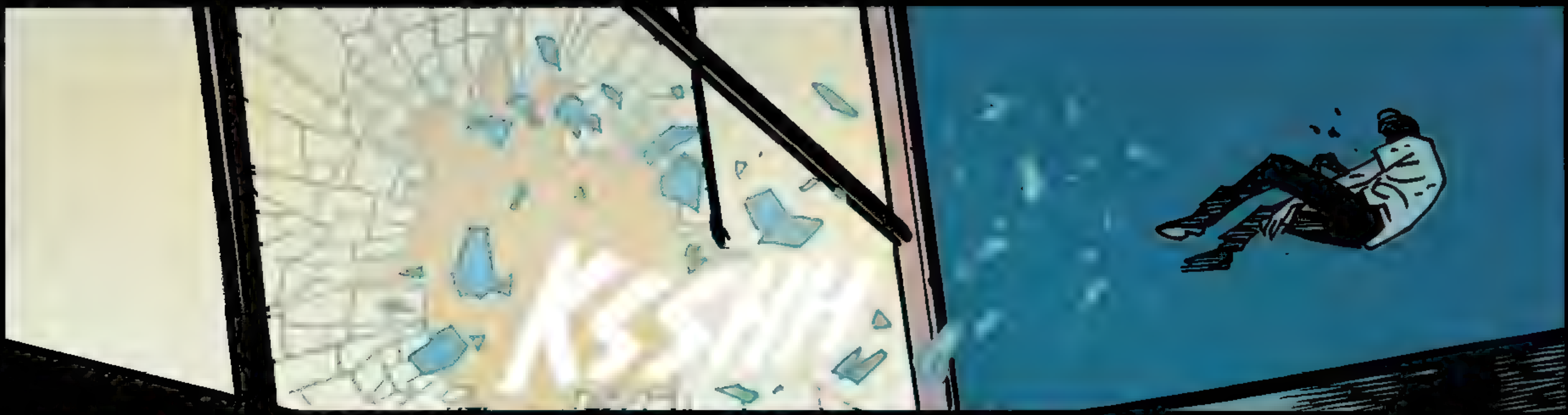
I JUST STOLE
INFORMATION FROM
IRON MAN.

DO YOU
THINK THAT'S
ALL I
STOLE?

IN FACT,
I FOUND TWO
MORE GADGETS OF
INTEREST. AN **EARPIECE**
DESIGNED TO **PREVENT**
INVASIONS OF
THE MIND--

--AND
THIS.





NO ONE
PLAYS ME,
"LION."



THAT'S
NO
SECRET.



NO ONE
GETS INTO MY
HEAD UNLESS
I LET
THEM.

AND I
RARELY
LET THEM.



AND
JUST SO WE
UNDERSTAND
ONE ANOTHER...
HERE'S THE
DEAL.

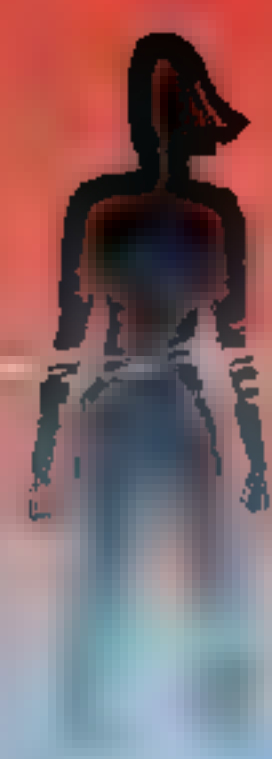
HKKKK!



YOU
WORK FOR
ME NOW.

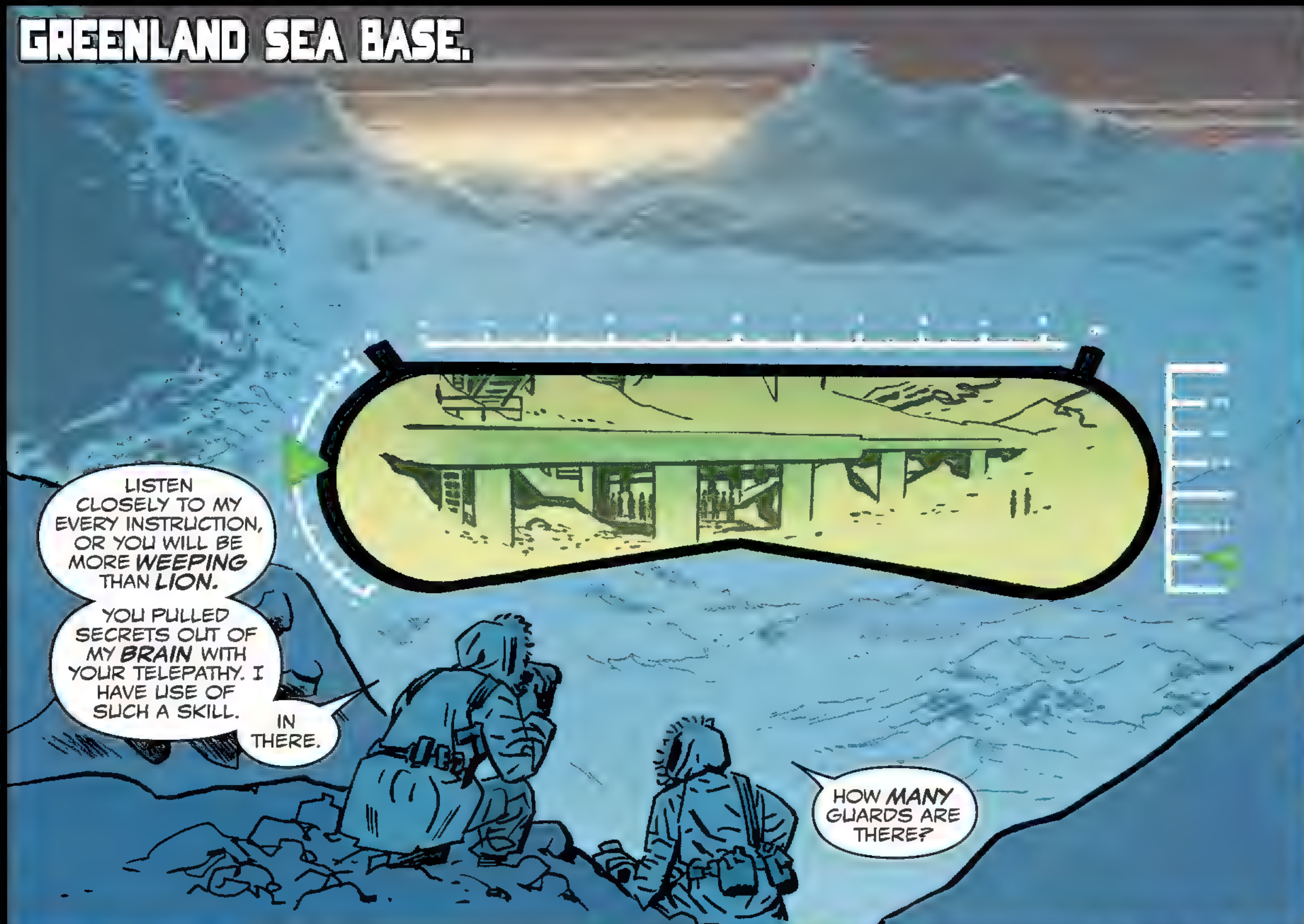


NO MORE SECRETS



SAMUEL
MW

GREENLAND SEA BASE.



NATASHA ROMANOFF

FIRST KILL MISSION:

THE YUGOSLAVIAN

PAPA!

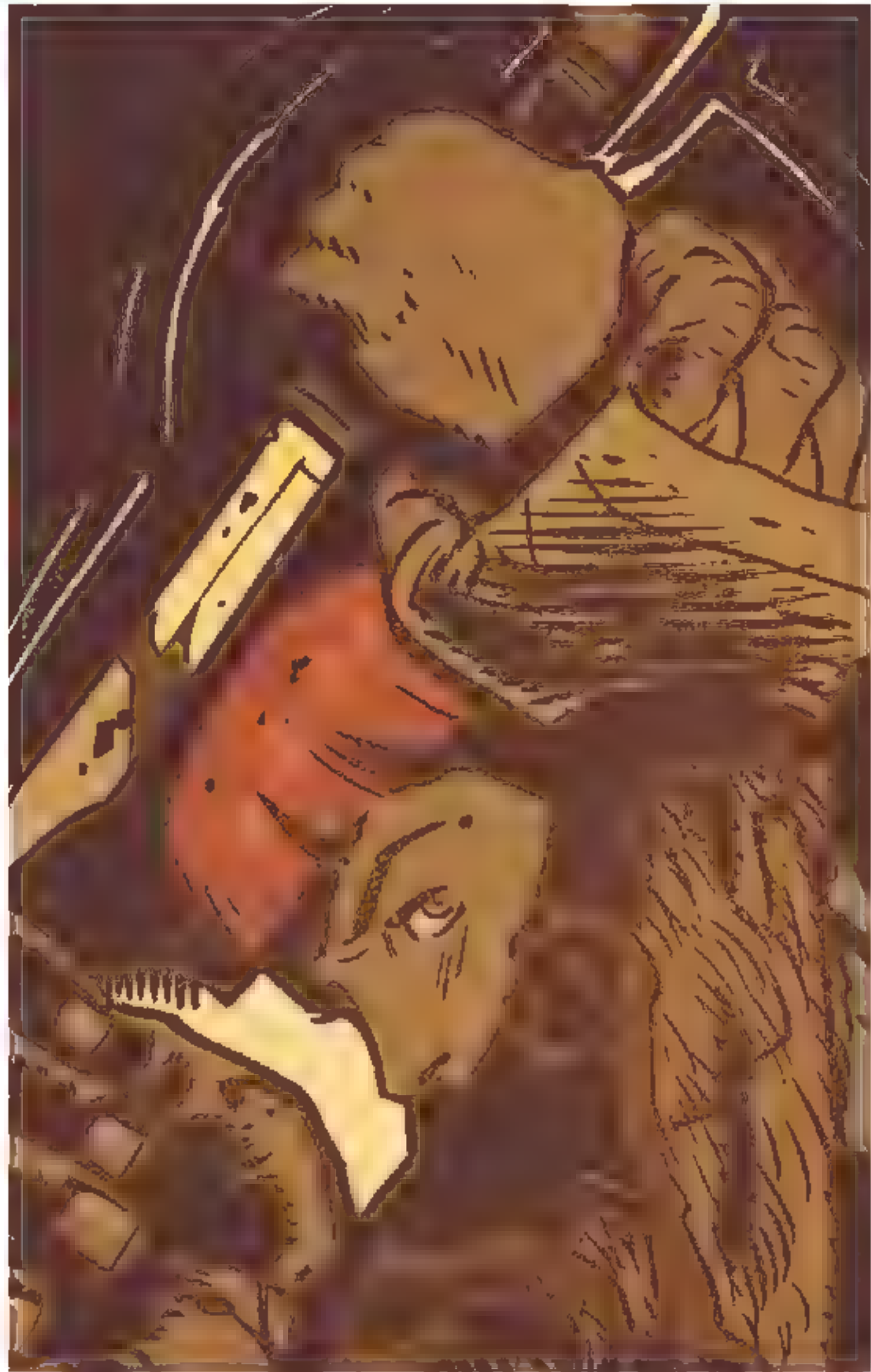
MAMA
SAID NOTHING
OF YOU BEING
RELEASED
TODAY!

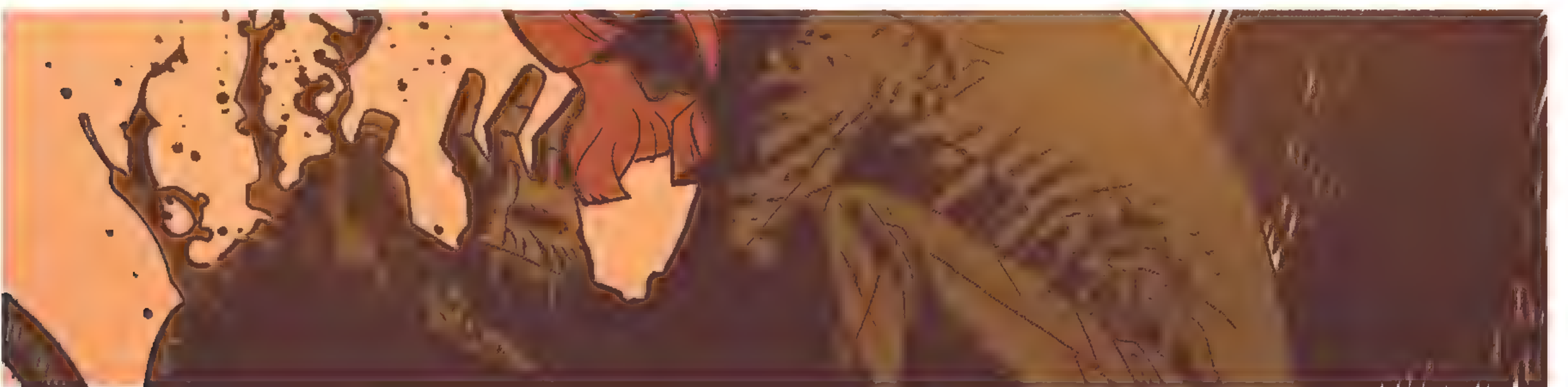
WE
WANTED TO
KEEP IT A
SURPRISE.

WHOA.

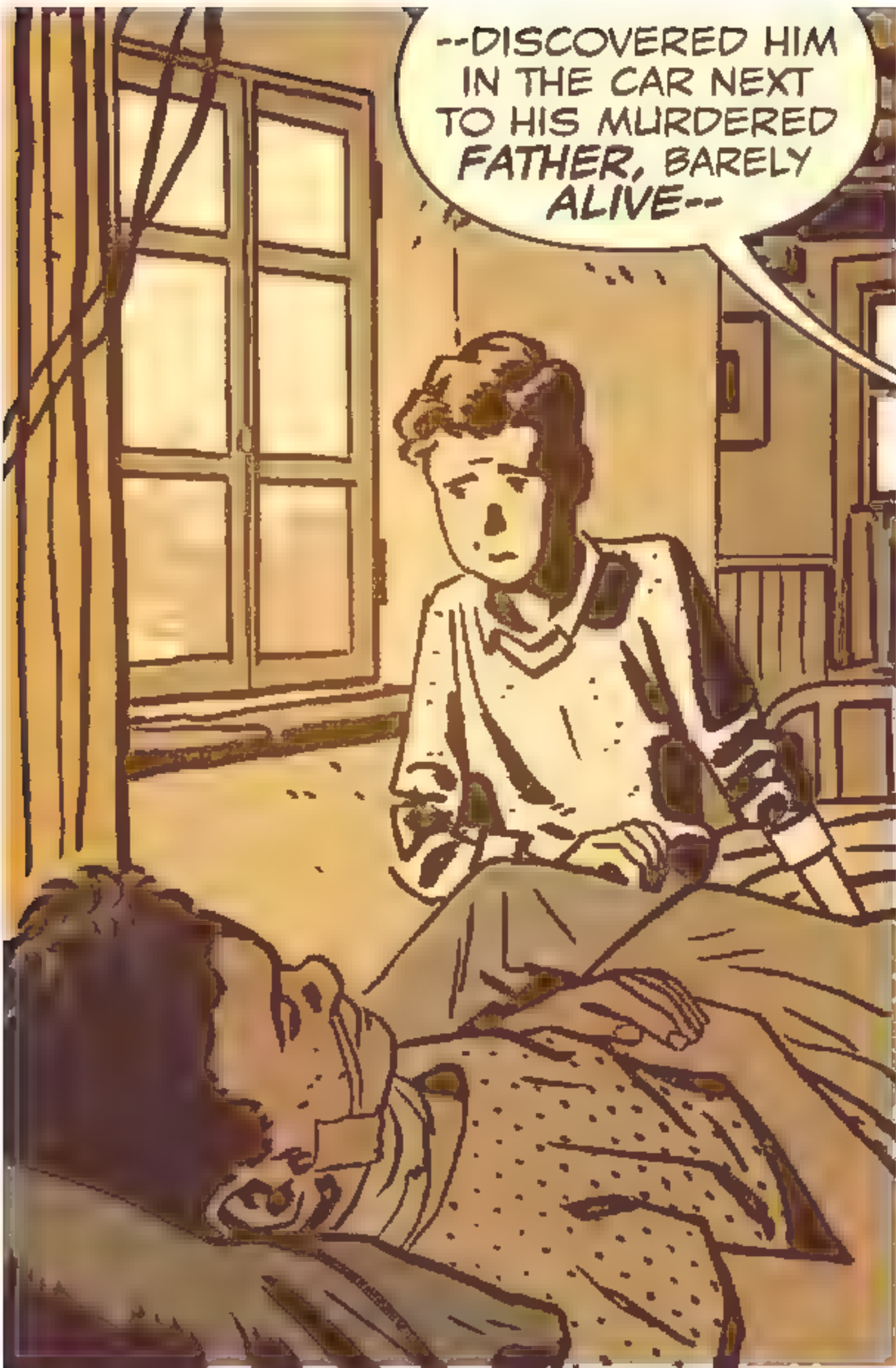
YOU LIKE? IT'S
BRAND NEW.
YOUR FATHER RIDES
IN STYLE.
ALWAYS.

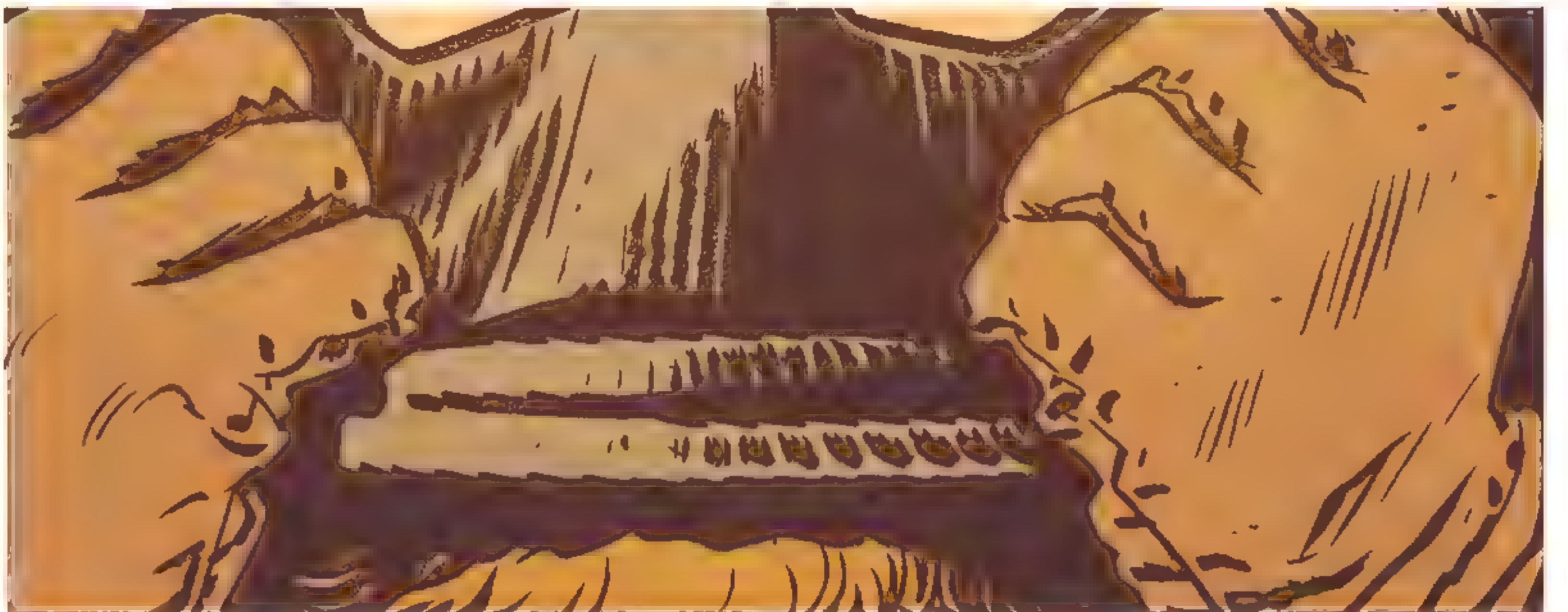




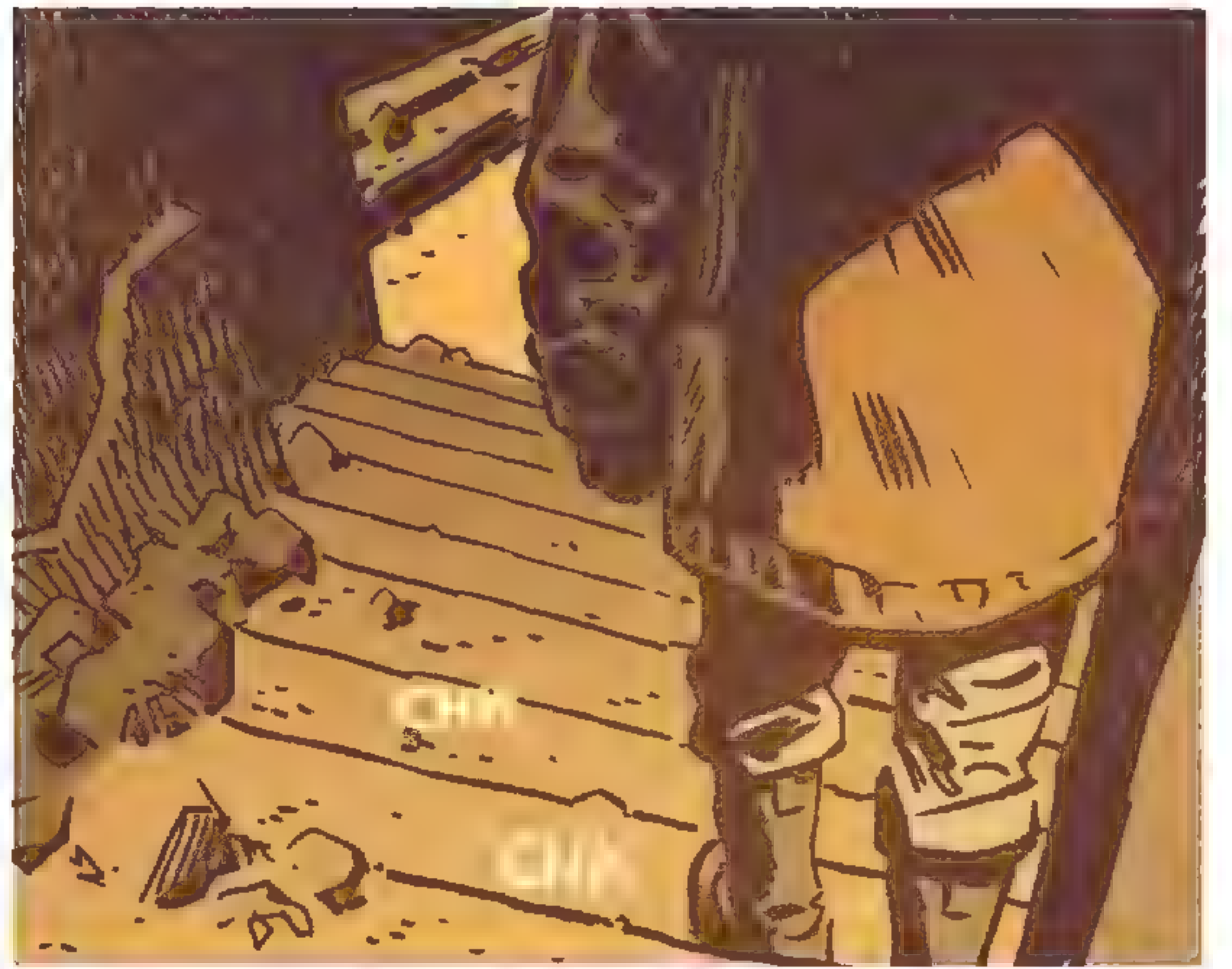
















REALLY? THAT'S WHERE YOU KEEP YOUR ONLINE PORN STASH?

WHAT'S THE PASSWORD?

RRRRGH!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "ABCDEF"? ARE YOU CRAZY?

HE'S A HUMAN BEING, NOT A TOY. LET'S GO.

HNNN...



OH, RELAX. YOU GET TO HAVE YOUR FUN. SO I GAVE HIM A HEADACHE, SO WH--

NNNNNN--



GRAAA--



C'MON. HE WAS A BAD GUY. CREEPY THOUGHTS.

CLIMBING THROUGH HIS MIND WAS LIKE WALKING THROUGH AN OIL SLICK. NO HARM DONE TO THE WORLD AT LARGE.

CLIMBING THROUGH HIS MIND WAS LIKE WALKING THROUGH AN OIL SLICK. NO HARM DONE TO THE WORLD AT LARGE.



JUST KEEP
YOUR EYES
OPEN.

EXCELLENT
ADVICE, LITTLE
SPIDER.



HEADMISTRESS.

YOU'VE
COME FOR THE
CHILDREN UNDER
MY TUTELAGE, I
TRUST.

I'M
IMPRESSED
THAT YOU FOUND
THE DARK ROOM
EVEN AFTER WE
MOVED IT
HERE.

UNFORTUNATELY,
YOU'RE TOO
LATE. ITS TRAINEES
HAVE ALREADY BEEN
DISPATCHED ON
THEIR VARIOUS
MISSIONS.



WHERE?
WHERE
HAVE THEY
BEEN
SENT--?



THAT'S
CLOSE
ENOUGH,
DEAR.



OR WHAT?
YOUR BONES ARE
BRITTLE NOW,
YOUR SKIN IS
PAPER.

YOU'RE
NO THREAT
TO ME.

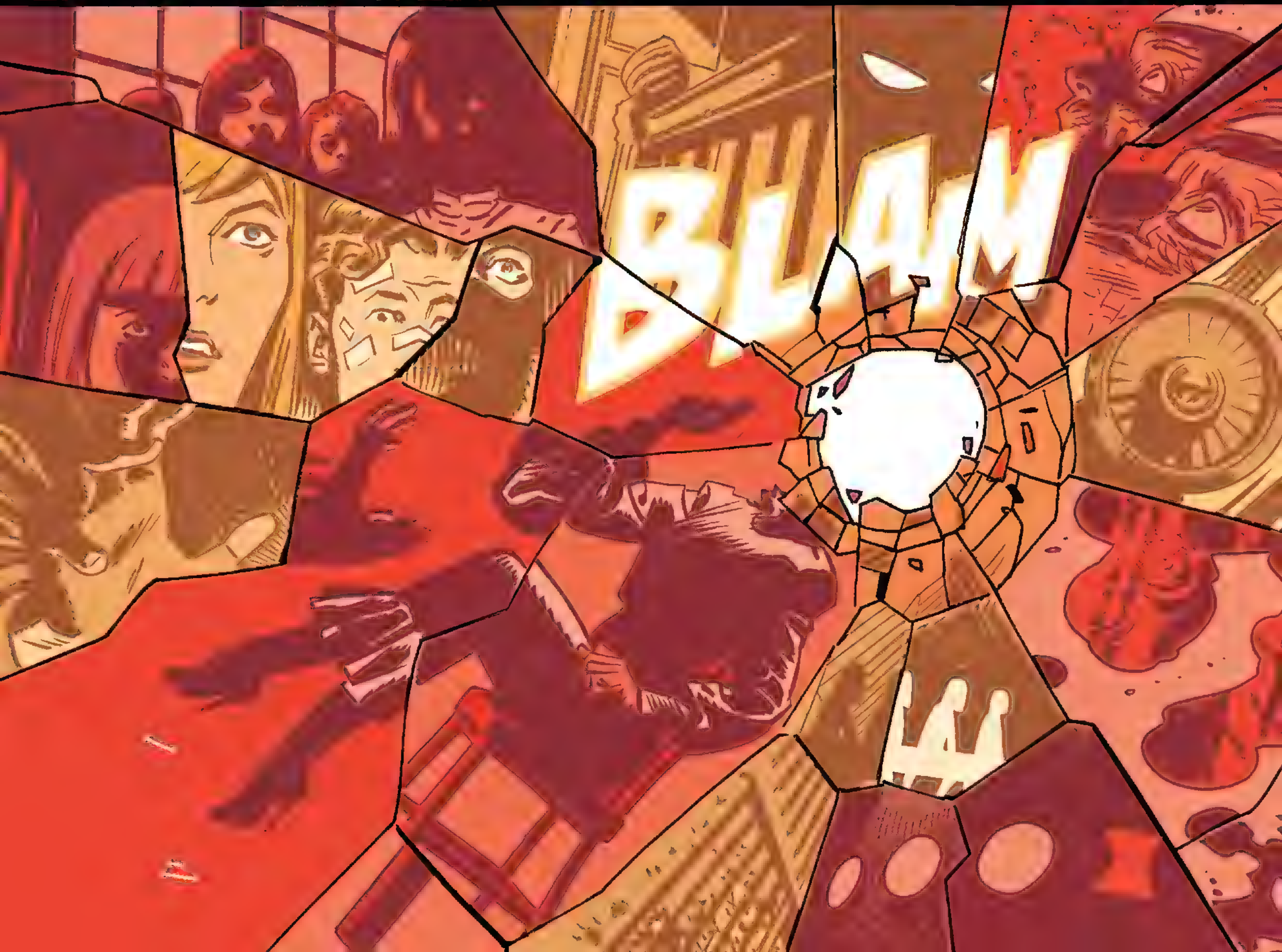


TRUE.

BUT
I AM.

RECLUSE.
OF
COURSE.

YOU
NEVER DID
UNTIE THOSE
APRON
STRINGS,
DID YOU?





EVERYTHING
SHE
KNOWS--!

LION,
SALVAGE
WHAT YOU CAN!
FIND THOSE
GIRLS!
HURRY!

--TRYING--!



GNNNNNNH!

IT'S...
IT'S...



...IT'S
ALL JUST
FRAGMENTS.
I GOT WHAT I
COULD,
BUT--

THEN
WORK ON
HER.

MOTHER...
MOTHER,
NO...!





...
FINDING
WHAT YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR,
YOU AWFUL
LITTLE BOY?

GO AHEAD.
YOU WON'T
LEAVE THIS ROOM
ALIVE WITH THE
INFORMATION.



I...
WOW.

WHAT?



SHE...SHE KNOWS
NOTHING. I MEAN,
SHE THINKS SHE
DOES, BUT--

WHAT?

--BUT THE
HEADMISTRESS
KEPT EVERYTHING
FROM HER...



...AND
SHE DOESN'T
EVEN REALIZE
IT.



SHE'S FULL TO THE BRIM
WITH COMBAT KNOWLEDGE.
THAT LEFT HER ROOM FOR
ONLY ONE MORE THOUGHT
IN HER BRAIN, AND WHAT
A KICKER:



SHE'S
ACTUALLY
AFRAID
OF YOU.

THAT'S
A LIE...!

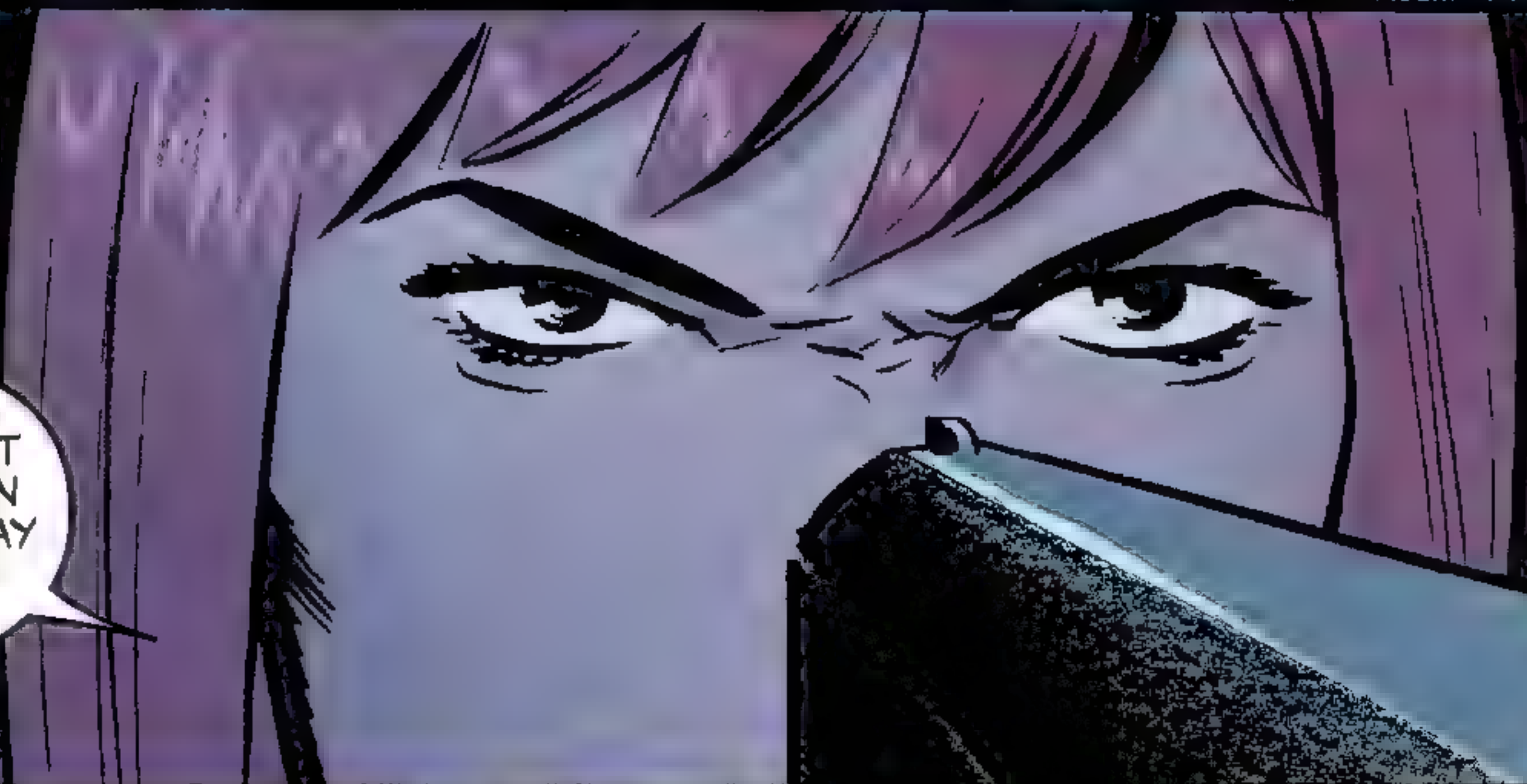




THAT'S
A LIE!

YOUR
MOTHER
SHOWED ME
LENIENCY ONCE
UPON A TIME,
RECLUSE.

IN HER
MEMORY, PUT
THE GUN DOWN
NOW AND I MAY
DO THE SAME
FOR YOU.



WHY?
WHY DID
MOTHER
ALWAYS LOVE
YOU
MORE?



BECAUSE
SHE
RESPECTED
ME.

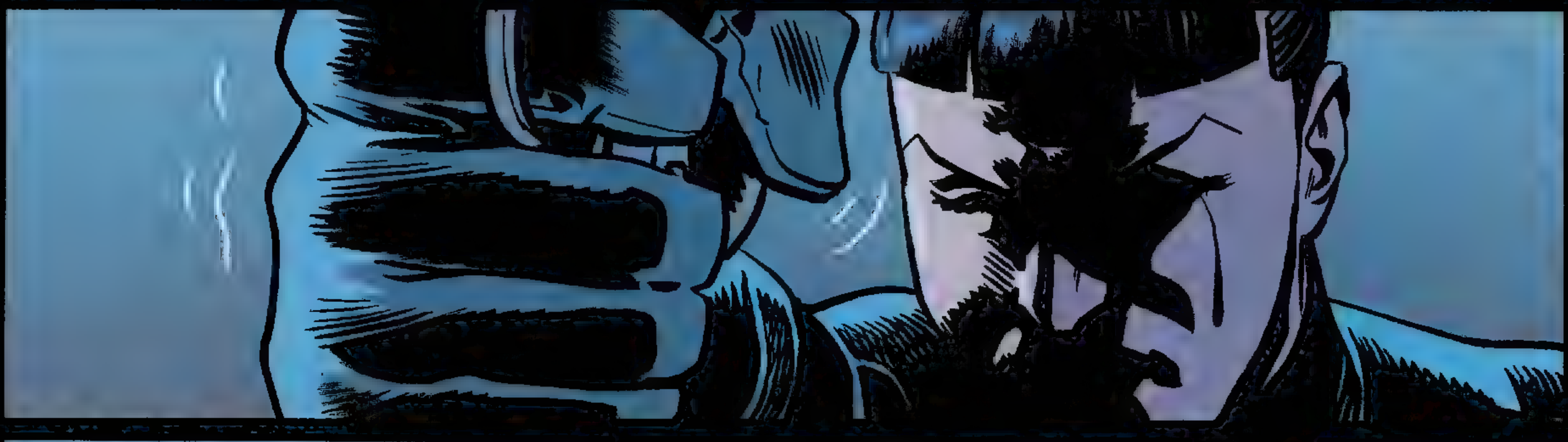


SHE SAW
IN ME THE WILL
TO CONQUER MY
FEARS WITHOUT
DOUBTING
MYSELF.

YOU
NEVER
HAD THAT.



IF YOU
DID, YOU'D
HAVE ALREADY
PULLED THAT
TRIGGER.



A woman with pink hair is shown holding a man by the back of his head. She is looking down at him with a determined expression. The man is wearing a white shirt and has his hands behind his head.

GOOD
GIRL.



A man in a suit is shown holding a woman by the back of her head. He is looking down at her with a determined expression. The woman is wearing a white shirt and has her hands behind her head.

I PITY
YOU.

YOU
WASTED YOUR
ENTIRE LIFE
TRYING TO
BE ME.



A close-up of a woman's face, looking down with a determined expression. She has pink hair and is wearing a white shirt.

THAT
WILL NEVER
HAPPEN.



A woman with pink hair is shown holding a man by the back of his head. She is looking down at him with a determined expression. The man is wearing a white shirt and has his hands behind his head.

YOU'RE
TOO
WEAK.



SOMEDAY...



SOMEDAY,
WHAT?
THEY'LL
SING YOUR
PRaises?
THEY'LL WRITE
YOUR
STORY?

YOU DON'T
HAVE A
STORY, LITTLE
ONE.
YOU'RE
SIMPLY A
FOOTNOTE
IN MINE.



DON'T
YOU TURN
YOUR BACK
ON ME!



YOU'LL
PAY FOR
WHAT YOU'VE
DONE!

**I
SWEAR
IT!**



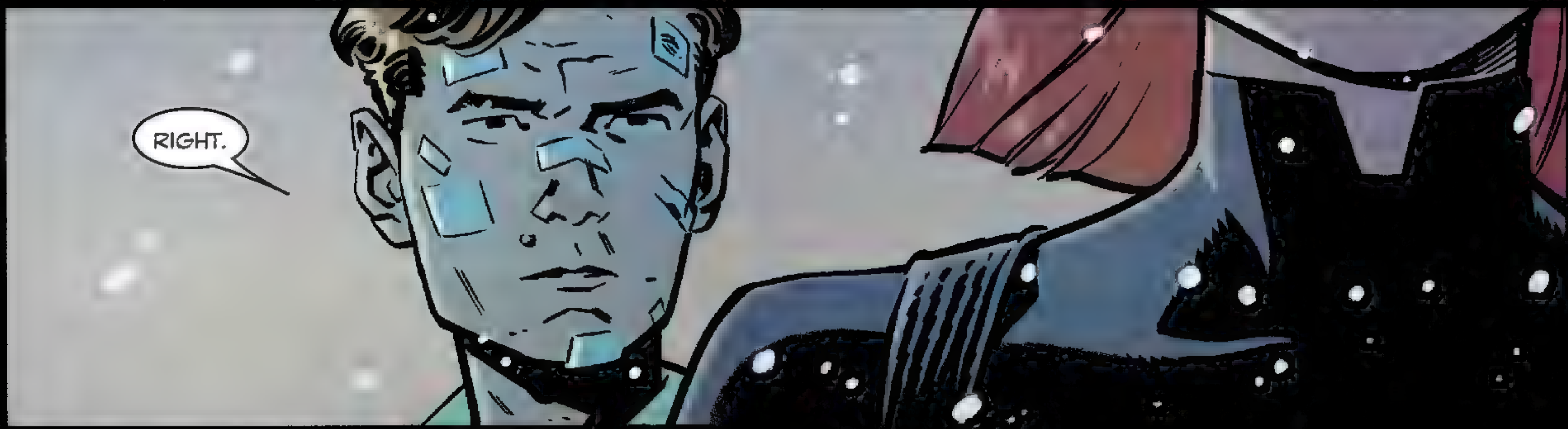
I'M SURE
YOU DO.

LET ME
KNOW HOW
THAT GOES.

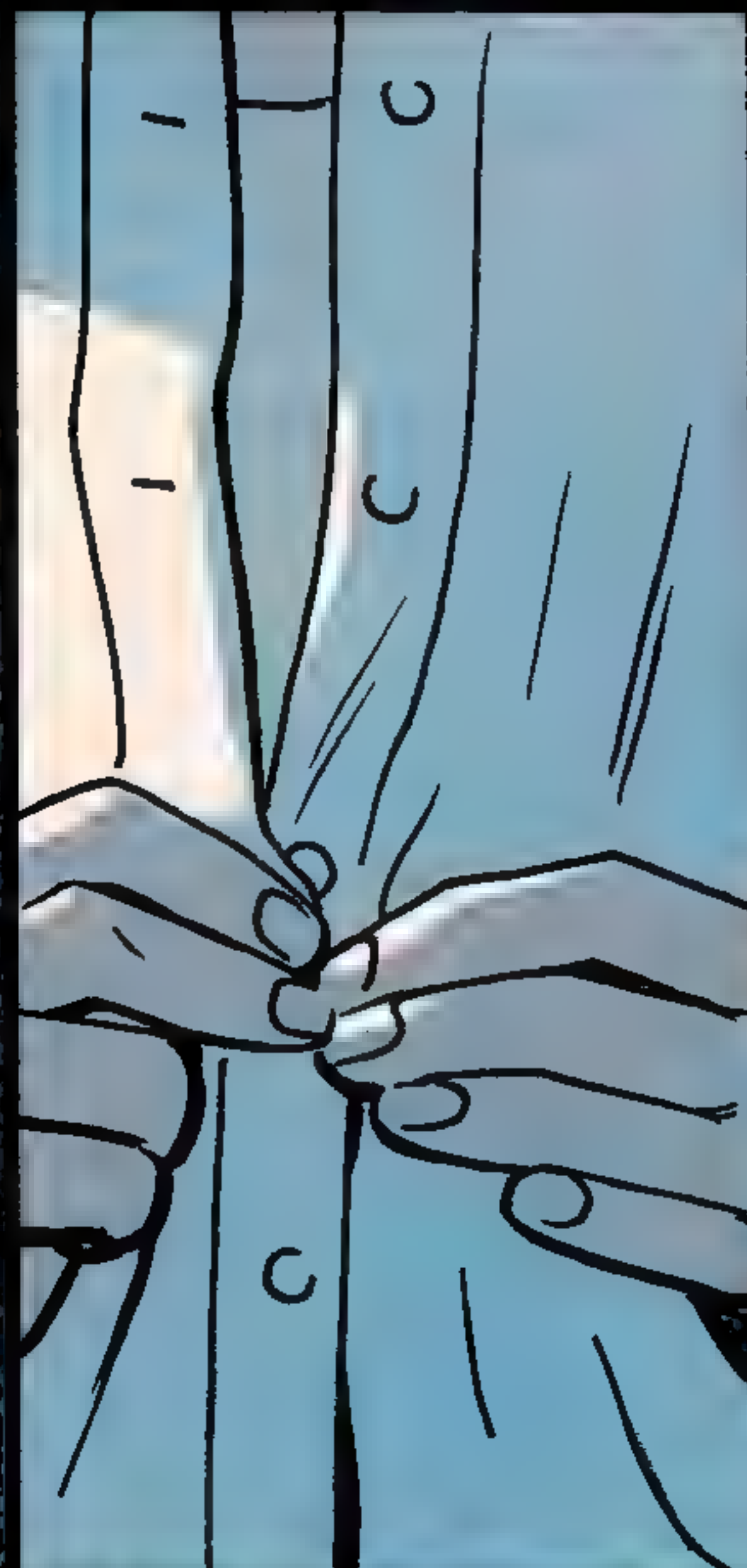


WANT ME TO
JUST POP HER
HEAD?

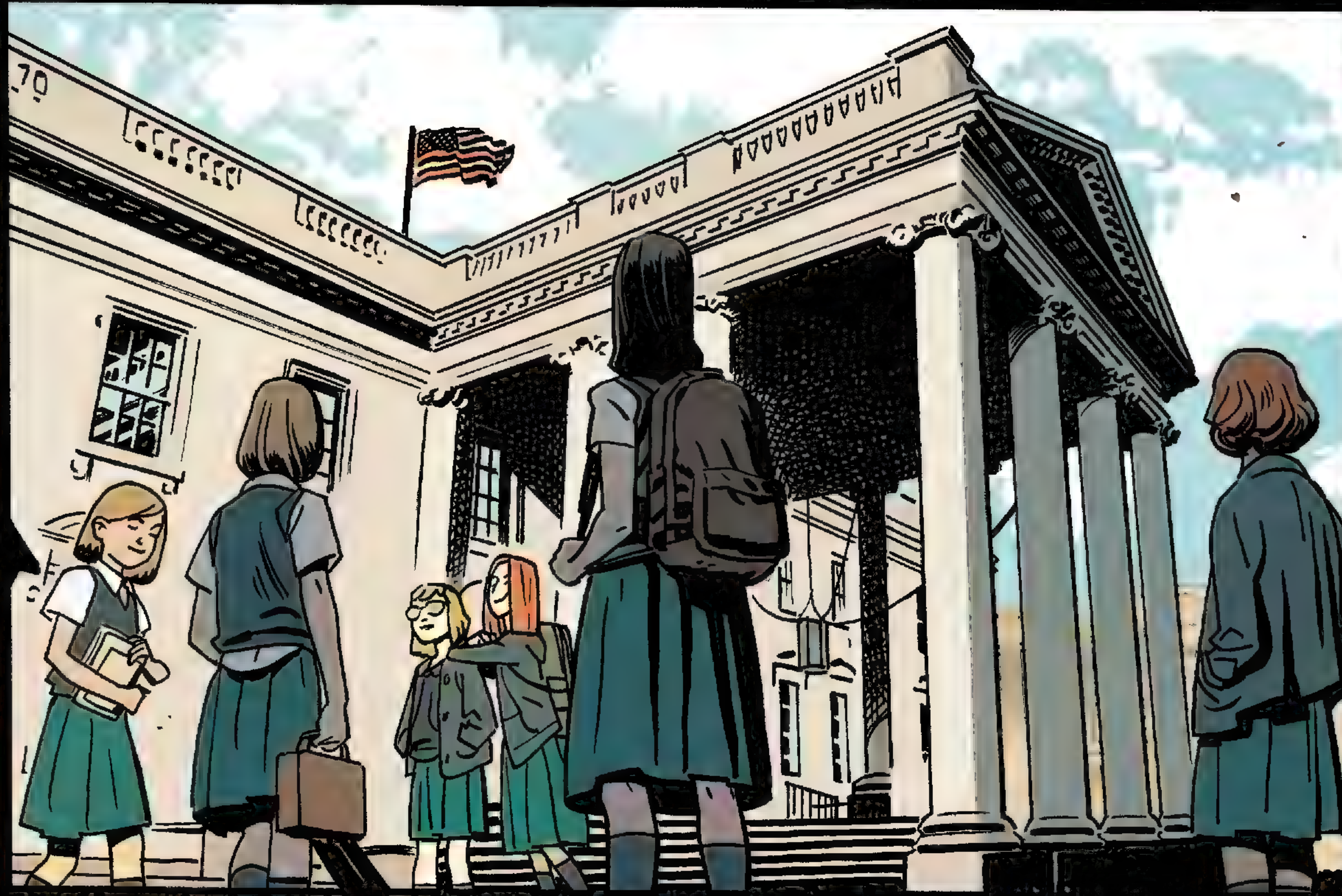
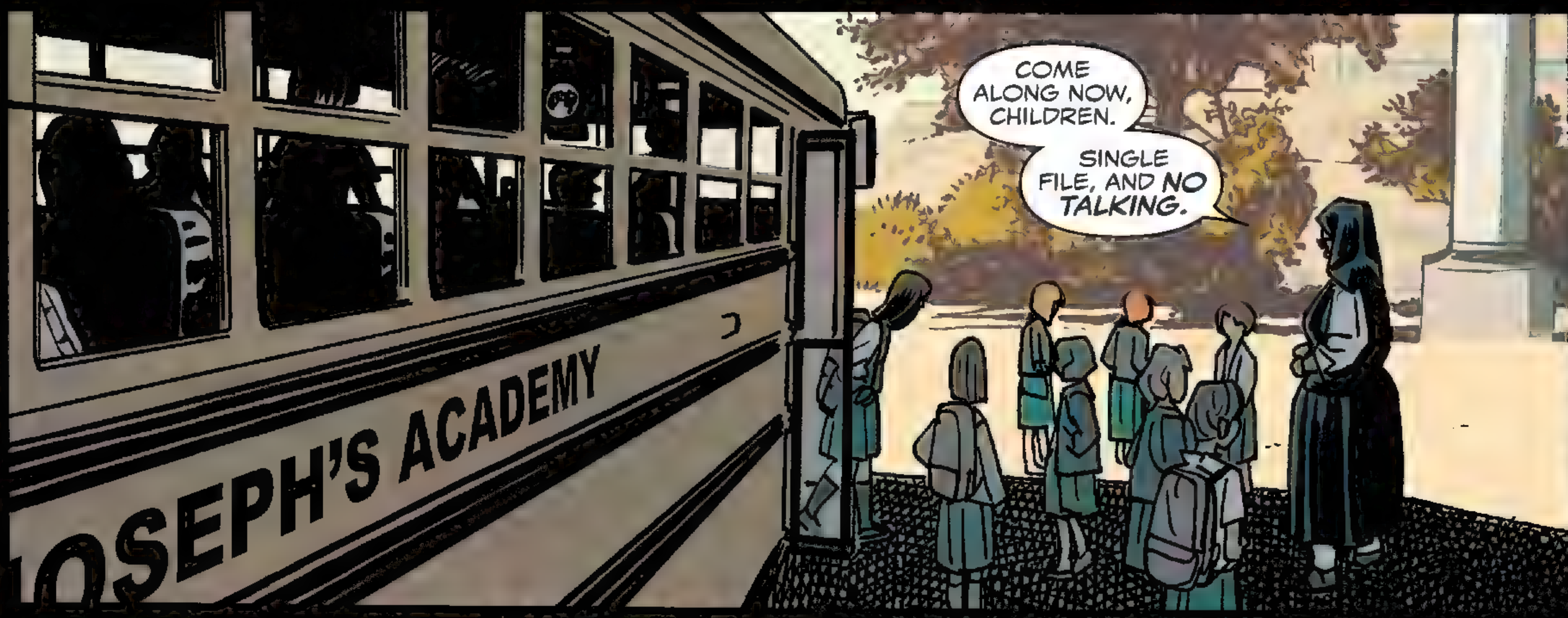
SHE ISN'T
WORTH THE
EFFORT.
BESIDES...







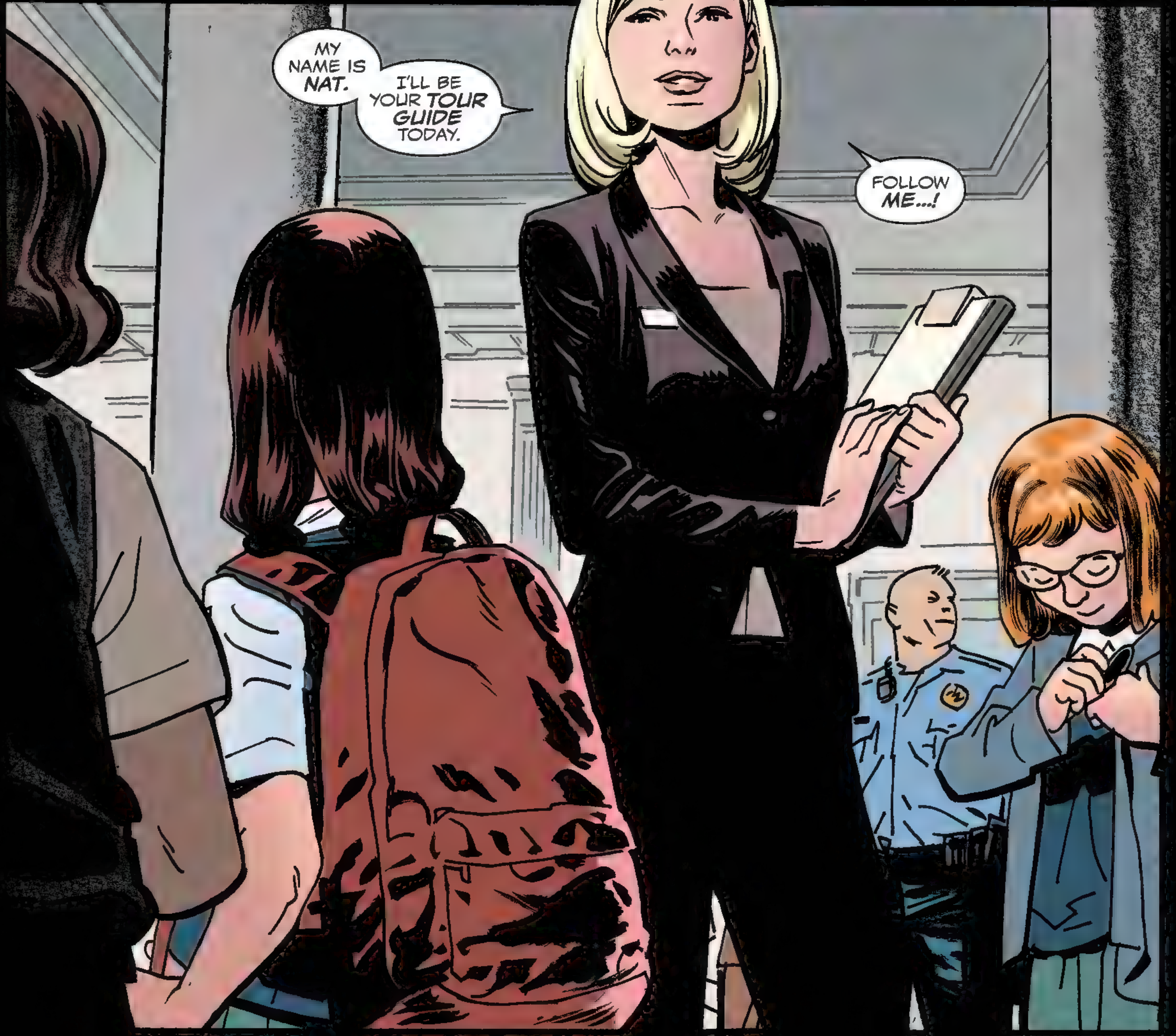
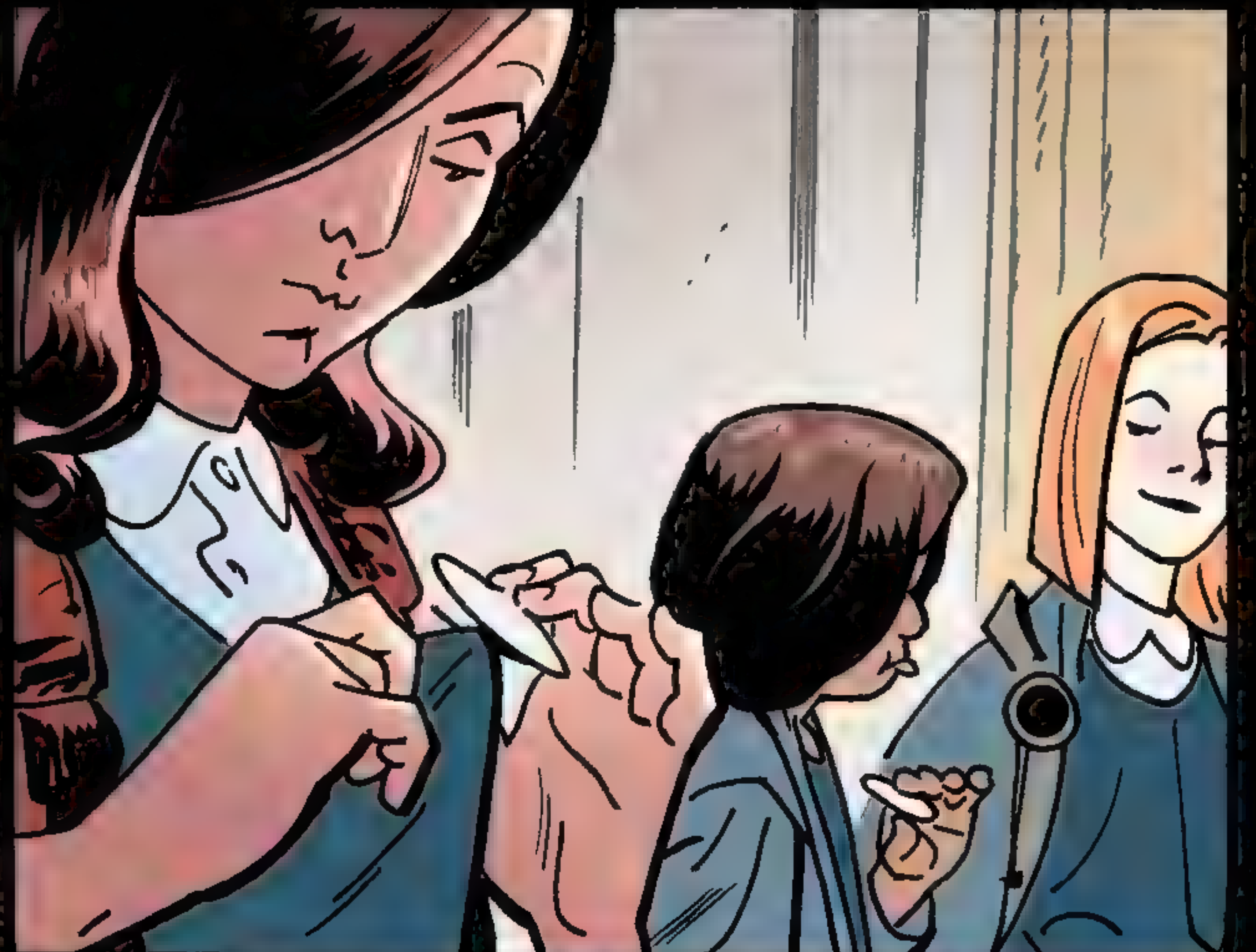






EVERY ONE
OF YOU GETS ONE
OF THESE **SPECIAL**
PINS TO MARK THIS
SPECIAL DAY.

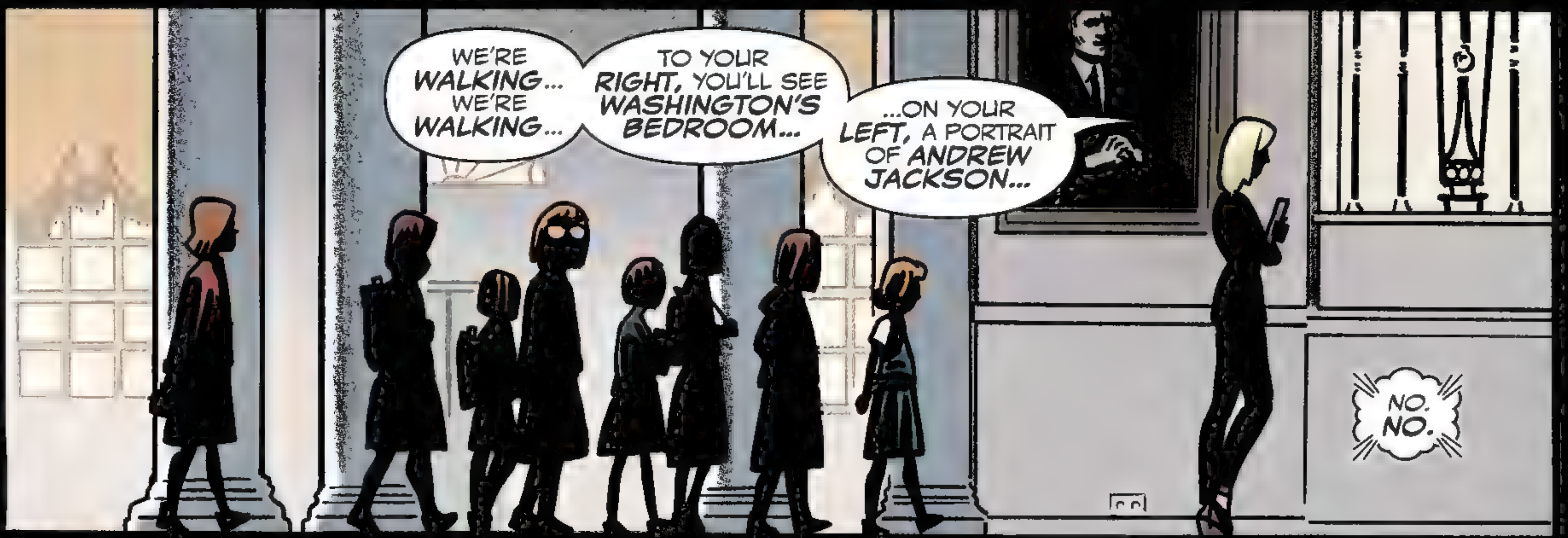
YOU'LL
TREASURE THEM,
AND YOUR PARENTS
WILL BE **VERY**
IMPRESSED.



MY
NAME IS
NAT.

I'LL BE
YOUR **TOUR**
GUIDE
TODAY.

FOLLOW
ME...!



WE'RE WALKING... WE'RE WALKING...

TO YOUR RIGHT, YOU'LL SEE WASHINGTON'S BEDROOM...

...ON YOUR LEFT, A PORTRAIT OF ANDREW JACKSON...

NO. NO.



YOU'RE DEPLORABLE AT THIS, NATASHA. DID YOU STUDY ANYTHING BEFORE WE GOT HERE?

I WAS COUNTING ON YOUR TELEPATHIC GUIDANCE, LION. YOU SAID YOU KNEW THE LAYOUT LIKE THE BACK OF YOUR HAND.

I MAY HAVE EXAGGERATED.

TERRIFIC.

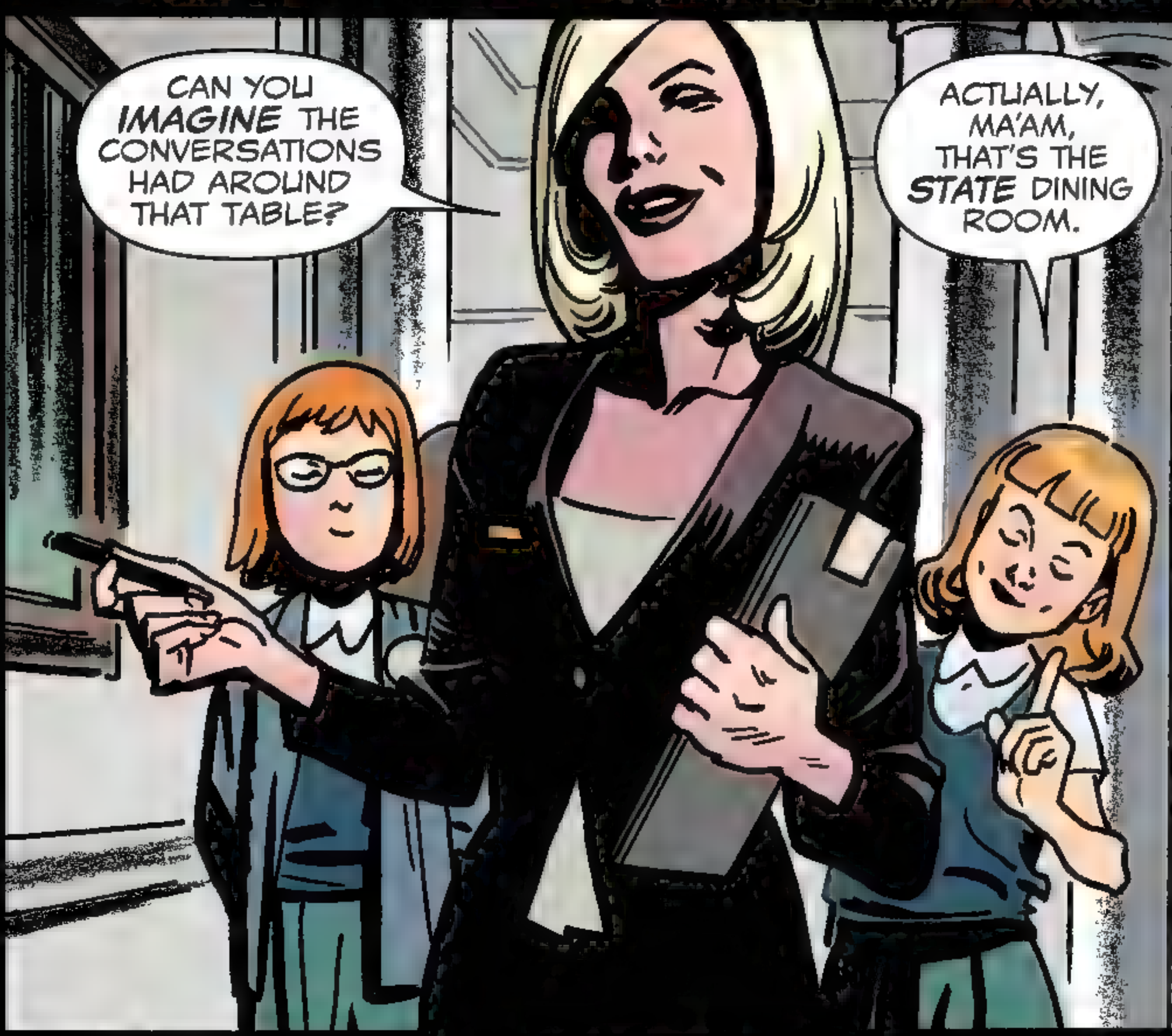


I'M PROBING THEIR LITTLE BRAINS TO SEE WHICH ONE'S THE DARK ROOM ASSASSIN WE'RE AFTER, BUT IT'S NOT EASY FROM A DISTANCE. WATCH FOR CLUES.

DON'T GIVE ME ADVICE.

NOW HERE, WE HAVE THE FAMILY DINING ROOM.

STAY TOGETHER, GIRLS.

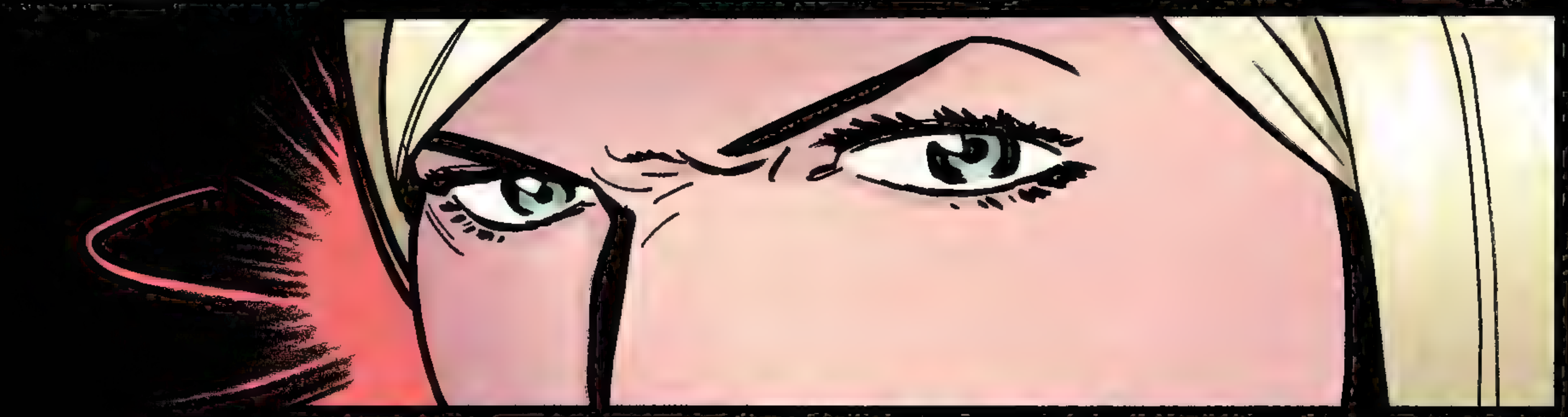


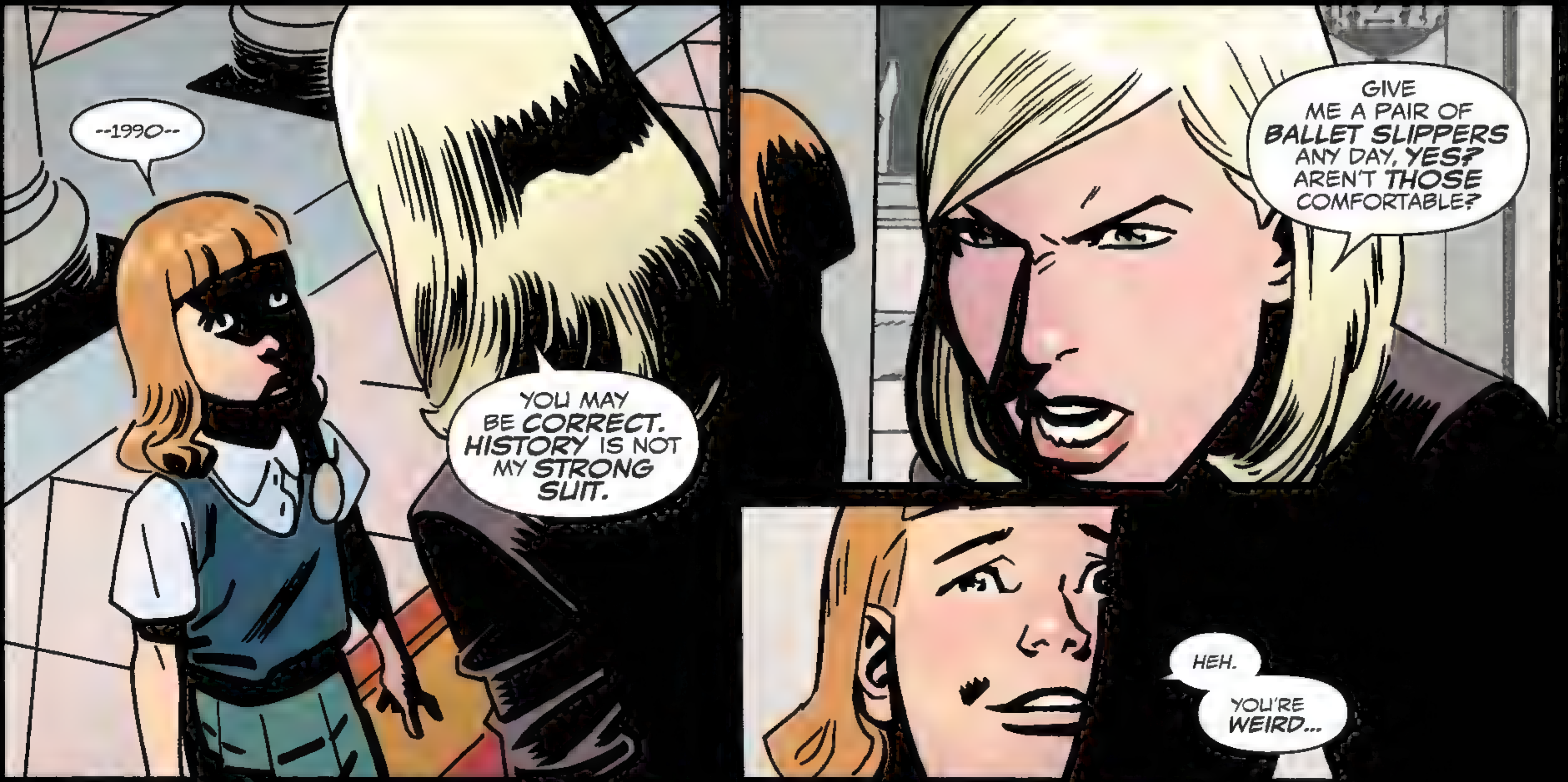
CAN YOU IMAGINE THE CONVERSATIONS HAD AROUND THAT TABLE?

ACTUALLY, MA'AM, THAT'S THE STATE DINING ROOM.



PRESIDENT REAGAN HELD A RECEPTION FOR SOVIET UNION GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV THERE BACK IN--

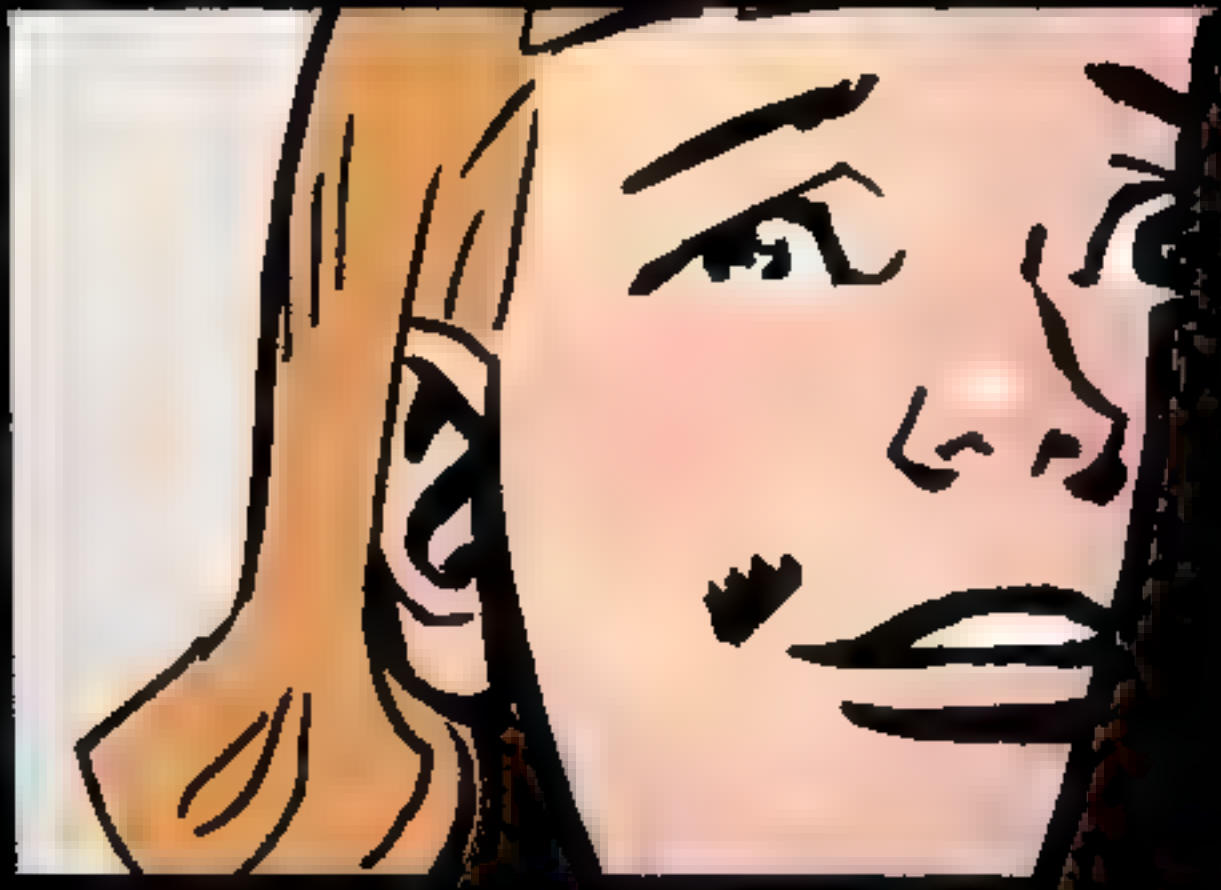




--1990--

YOU MAY BE CORRECT. HISTORY IS NOT MY STRONG SUIT.

GIVE ME A PAIR OF BALLET SLIPPERS ANY DAY, YES? AREN'T THOSE COMFORTABLE?

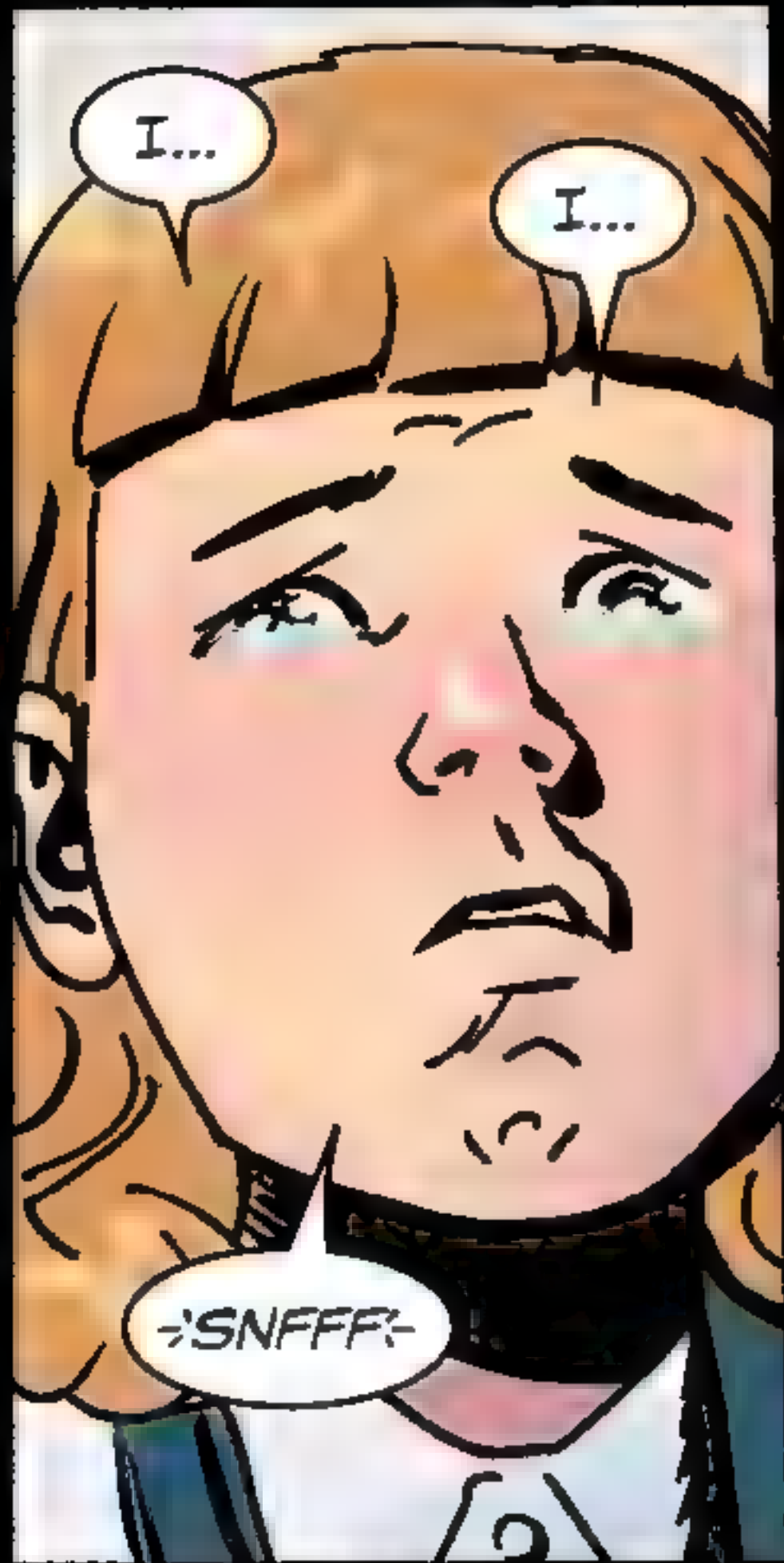


HEH. YOU'RE WEIRD...



YOU KNOW ABOUT GORBACHEV. WHAT ELSE ARE YOU AN EXPERT AT, LITTLE ONE?

WHAT DO THE WORDS "DARK ROOM" MEAN TO YOU?



I...

I...

-SNFFF-

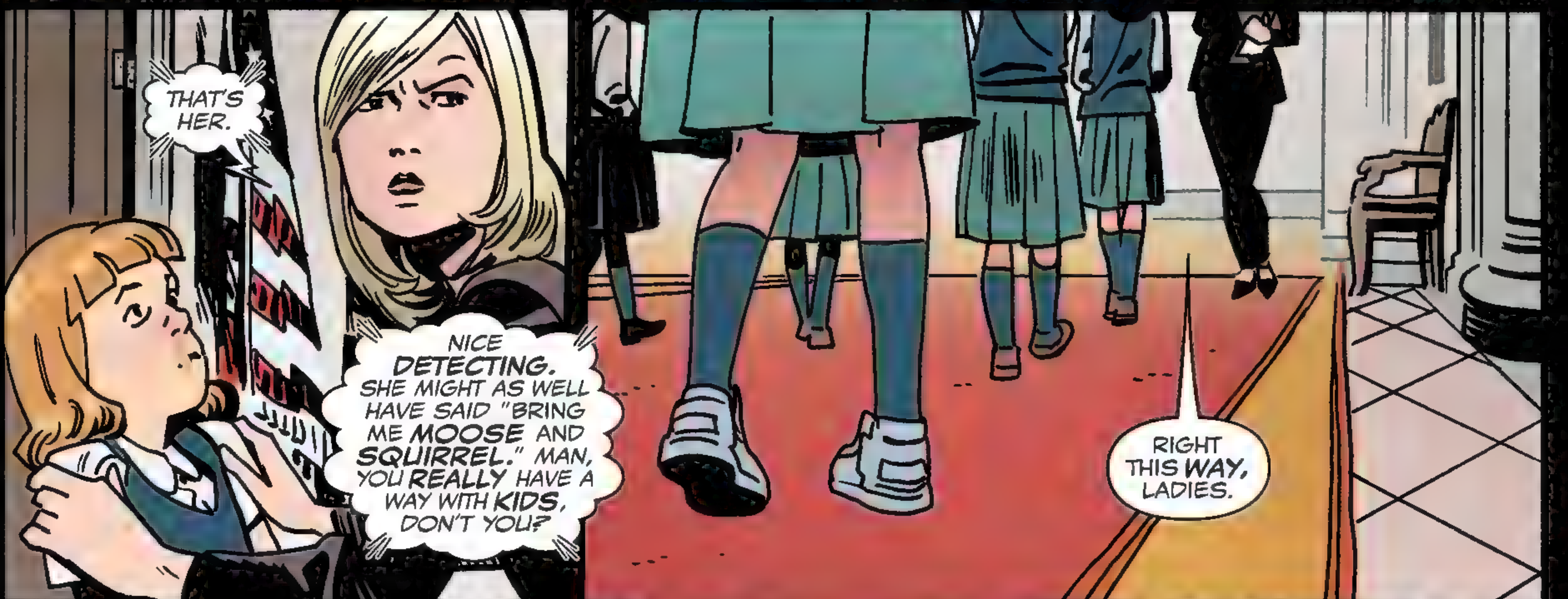


GOVORIT!

EXCUSE ME...



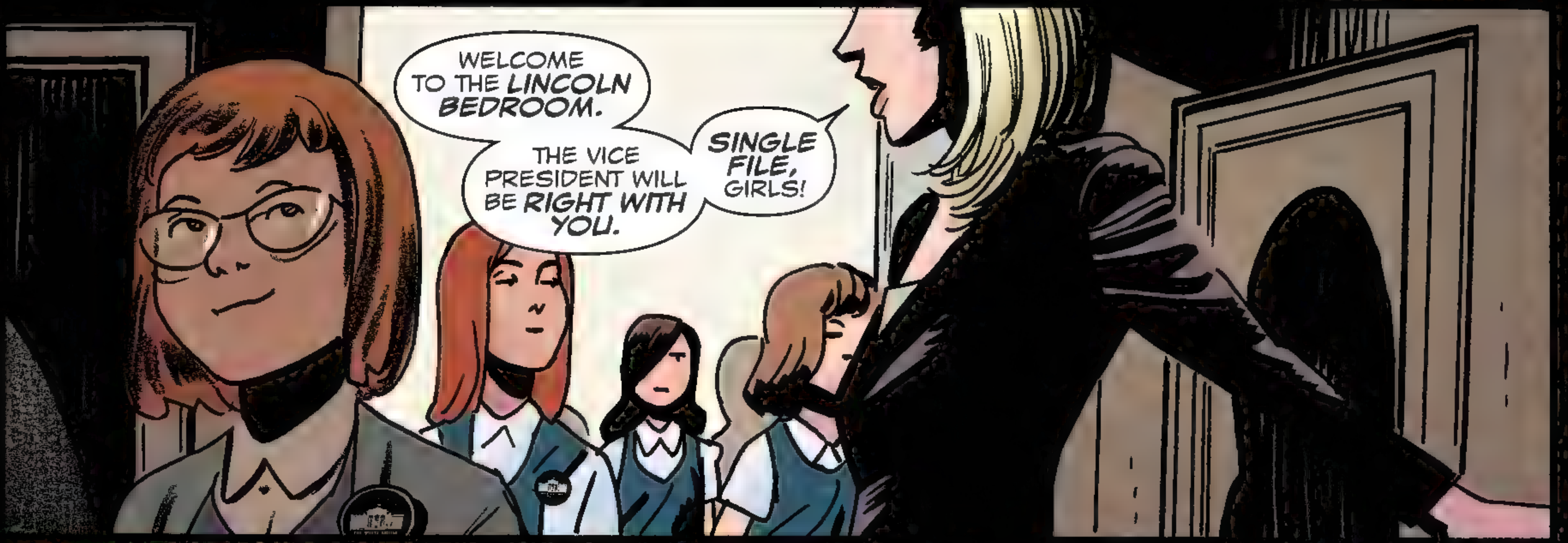
...WHEN DO WE MEET VICE PRESIDENT...?



THAT'S HER.

NICE DETECTING. SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SAID "BRING ME MOOSE AND SQUIRREL." MAN, YOU REALLY HAVE A WAY WITH KIDS, DON'T YOU?

RIGHT THIS WAY, LADIES.







NAT,
WE'VE GOT
TROUBLE
HERE!

I'M WELL
AWARE! I'M
CHASING
IT!

BLAM



THE LITTLE
IS HEADED FOR
THE SECOND
FLOOR--

NO! I
MEAN TROUBLE
HERE! WITH
ME!

WE THOUGHT
THERE WAS ONLY
ONE ASSASSIN,
BUT THERE ARE TWO
MORE HALF-PINT
SOCIOPATHS ON
THE LOOSE!
SAVE ME!



ALL OF YOU,
UP AGAINST
THE WALL! TELL US
WHERE YOU HAVE THE
VEEP OR THE HEAD
COUNT AROUND HERE'S
GONNA DROP REAL
FAST!

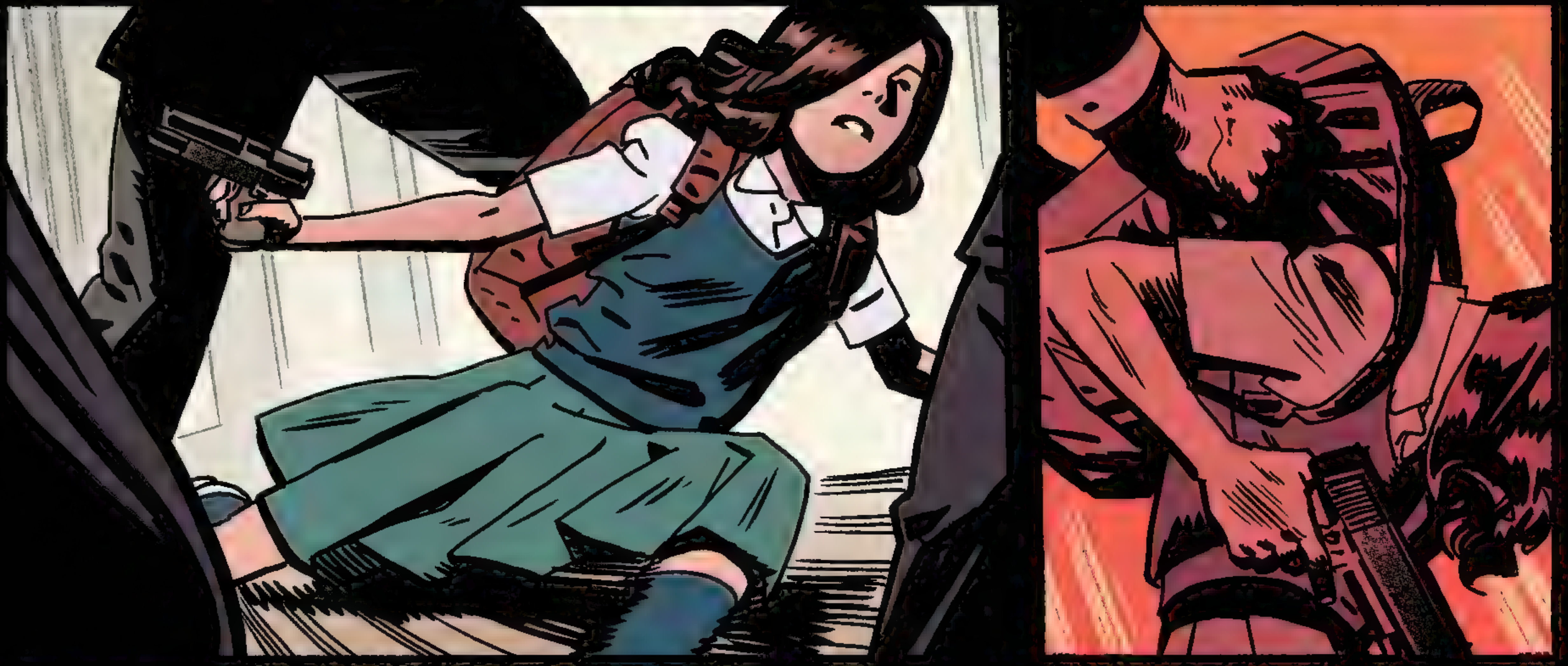
WHENEVER IS
CONVENIENT.

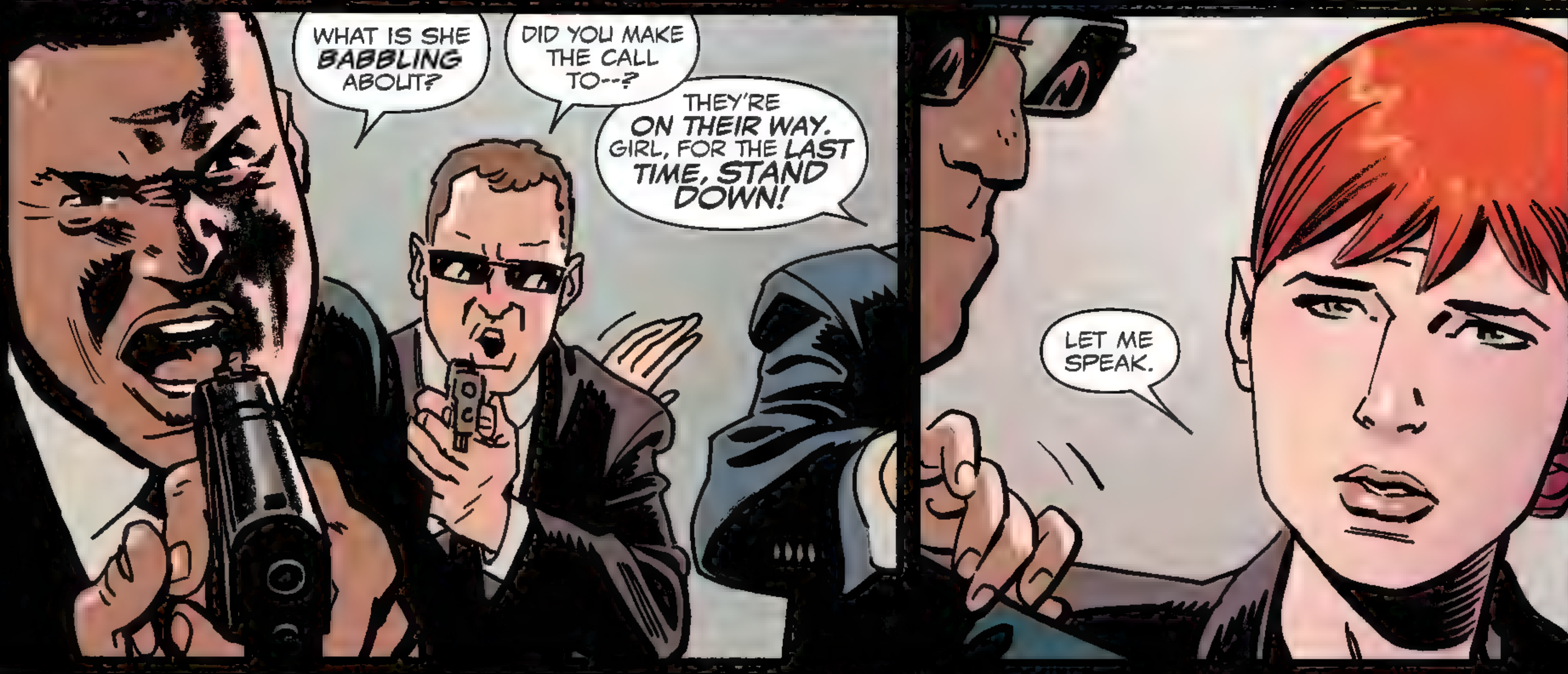


I MEAN
IT! I AM NOT GOING
BACK TO THE MOTHER
COUNTRY A FAILURE!
I'M COUNTING TO
THREE--

NICE
SHOOTIN',
TEX.

I KNOW.



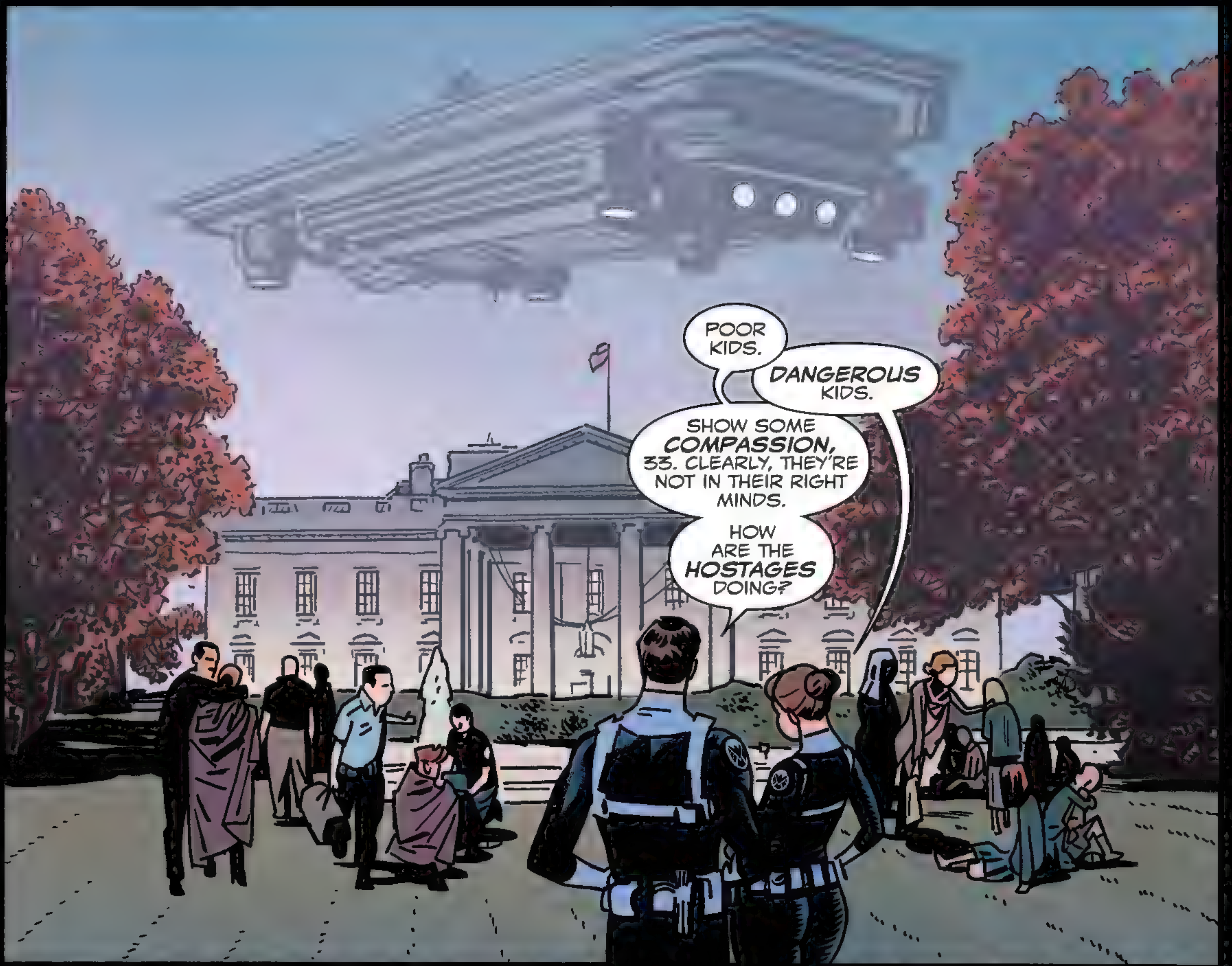




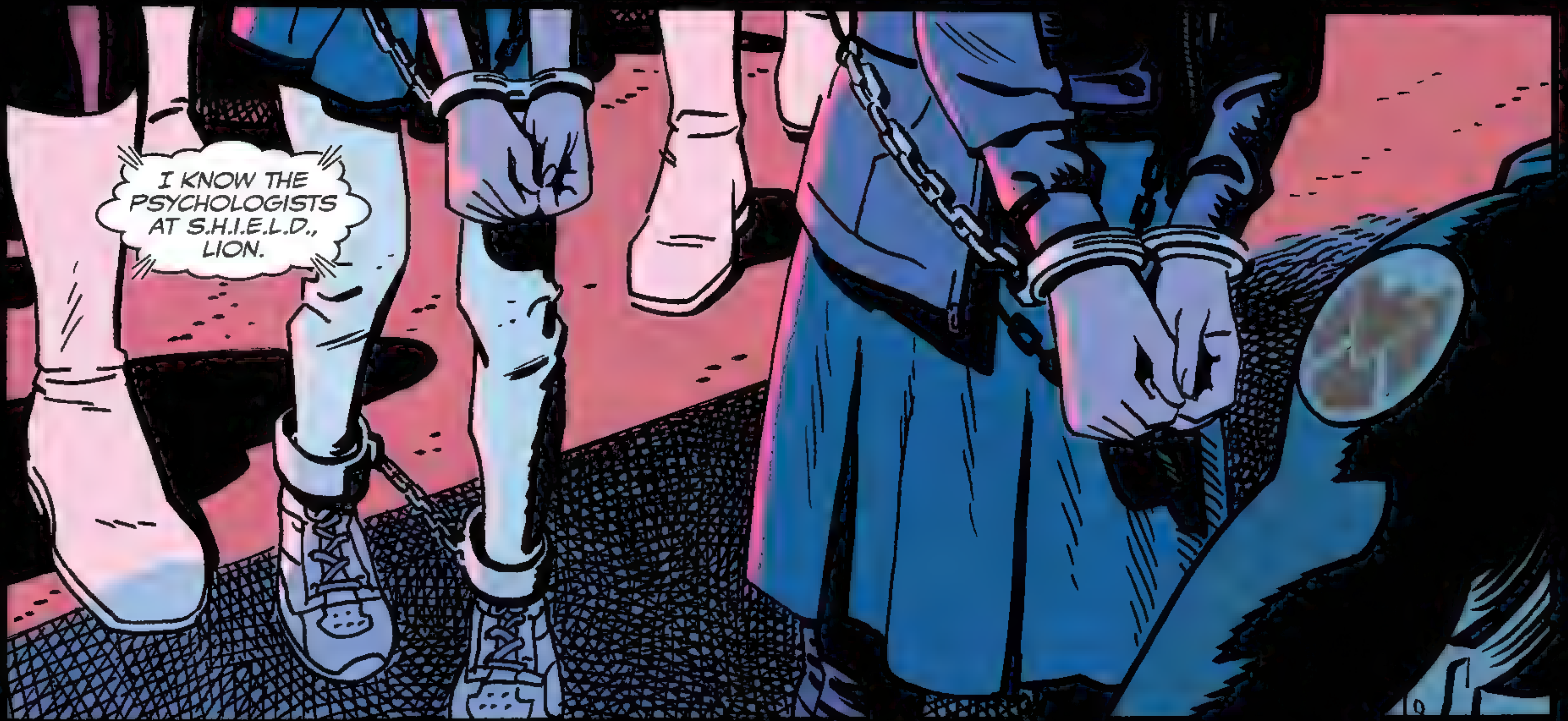












I KNOW THE
PSYCHOLOGISTS
AT S.H.I.E.L.D.,
LION.



IT MIGHT
NOT SEEM TO THE
GIRLS THAT THEY'RE
SAFE NOW, BUT THEY'LL
BE SHOWN KINDNESS AND
EVENTUALLY BE PLACED
INTO LOVING
HOMES.



THAT'S
THREE DOWN.
BUT GOD ONLY
KNOWS HOW MANY
MORE THE HEADMISTRESS
DISPATCHED
BEFORE SHE
DIED.



IF WE'RE
GOING TO FIND
THEM ALL, WE'LL
NEED A GLOBAL
VIEW OF THE
SITUATION.



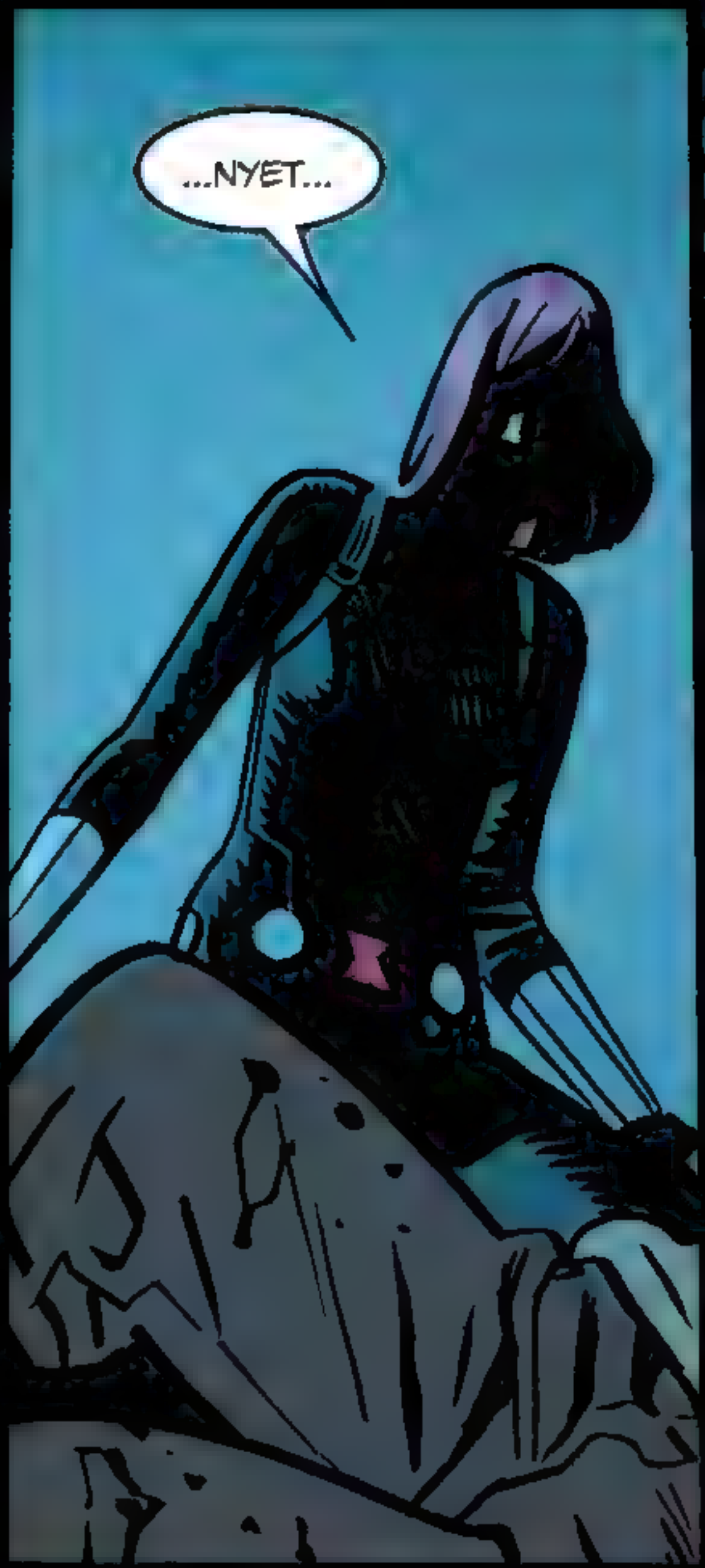


SAMWEE16
MW

BANG







...NYET...



IOSEF, DO NOT MOVE. TELL ME WHERE TO FIND A FIRST AID KIT AND I--

A WASTE. REMEMBER, I'M THE EXPERT--
-KAFF-

--THIS PARTICULAR TYPE OF WOUND. I'M TOO FAR GONE, NAT.



UNACCEPTABLE.
YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON ME. I KNOW THAT NOW. I--

IS THAT... WHAT YOU THINK...?
NOT... I...



BUT...

...BUT YOU'VE LEFT CLUES. A TRAIL TO YOUR HOME.

NONSENSE. I TOLD YOU BEFORE, I'M OUT OF THE GAME, NAT.

IT WAS RECLUSE WHO LURED ME HERE, WASN'T IT? IOSEF, I'M SO SORRY--



D-DON'T BE. GOOD TO KNOW I STILL... HAVE USE...
...EVEN IF JUST...AS BAIT.



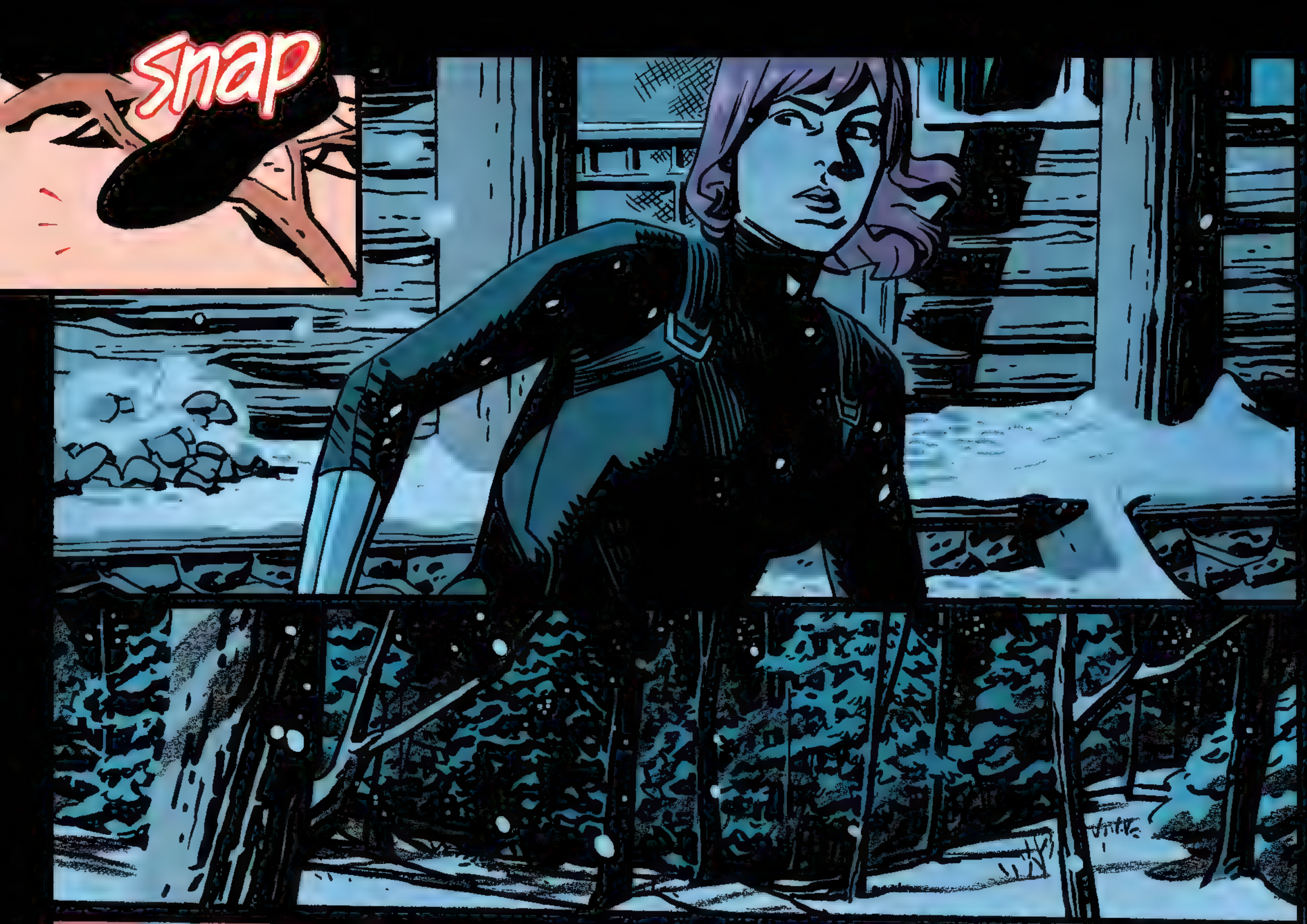
STAND STRONG, NAT.

CLOSE THE DOOR ON ALL THIS DARK ROOM BUSINESS ONCE AND FOR--

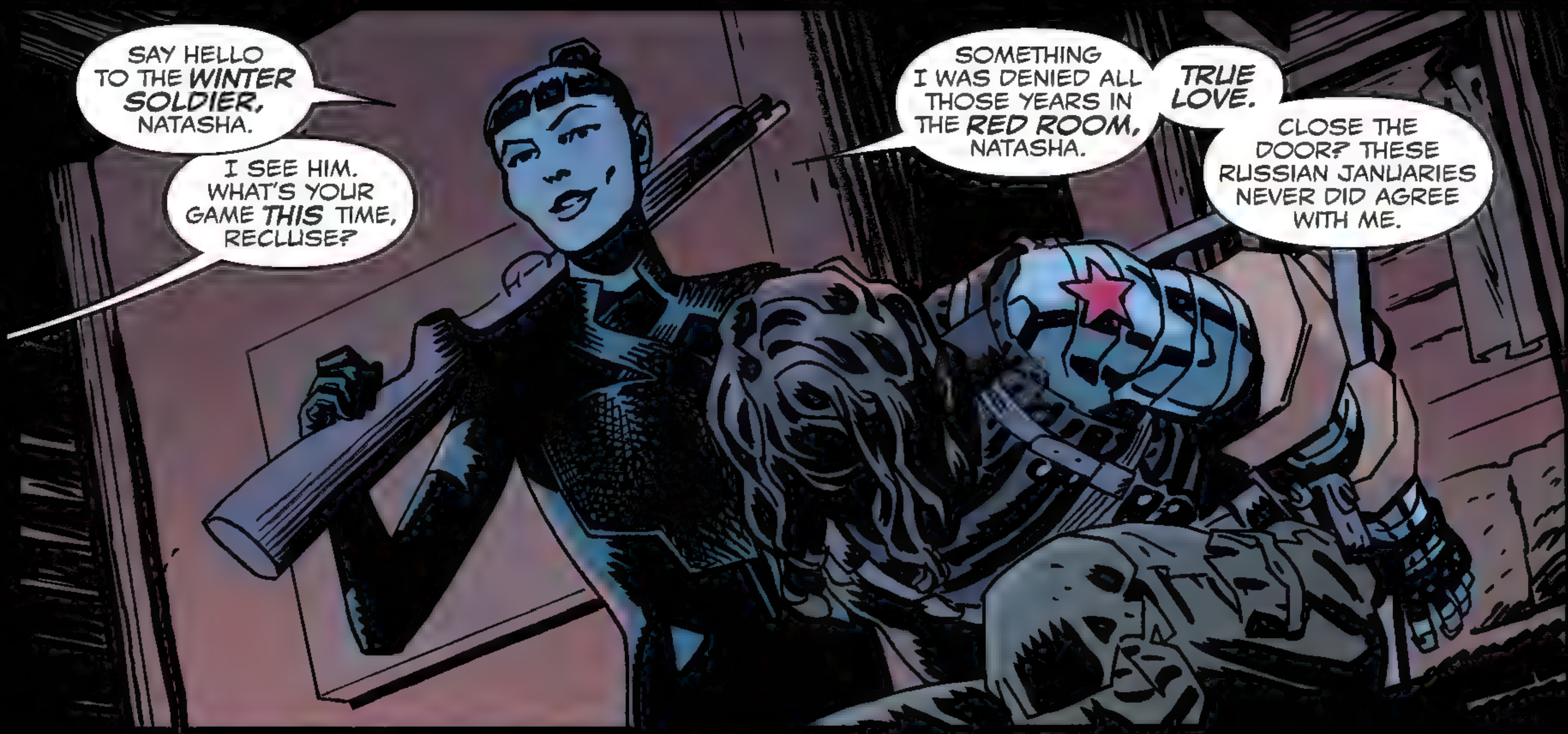


IOSEF...?









SAY HELLO TO THE WINTER SOLDIER, NATASHA.

I SEE HIM. WHAT'S YOUR GAME **THIS** TIME, RECLUSE?

SOMETHING I WAS DENIED ALL THOSE YEARS IN THE RED ROOM, NATASHA.

TRUE LOVE.

CLOSE THE DOOR? THESE RUSSIAN JANUARIES NEVER DID AGREE WITH ME.



NOT MY TRUE LOVE, OF COURSE.

IT SEEMS MR. BARNES HERE CARES FOR ANOTHER. ISN'T THAT **RIGHT**, BARNES?



GET UP, BARNES.

WE'RE LEAVING.

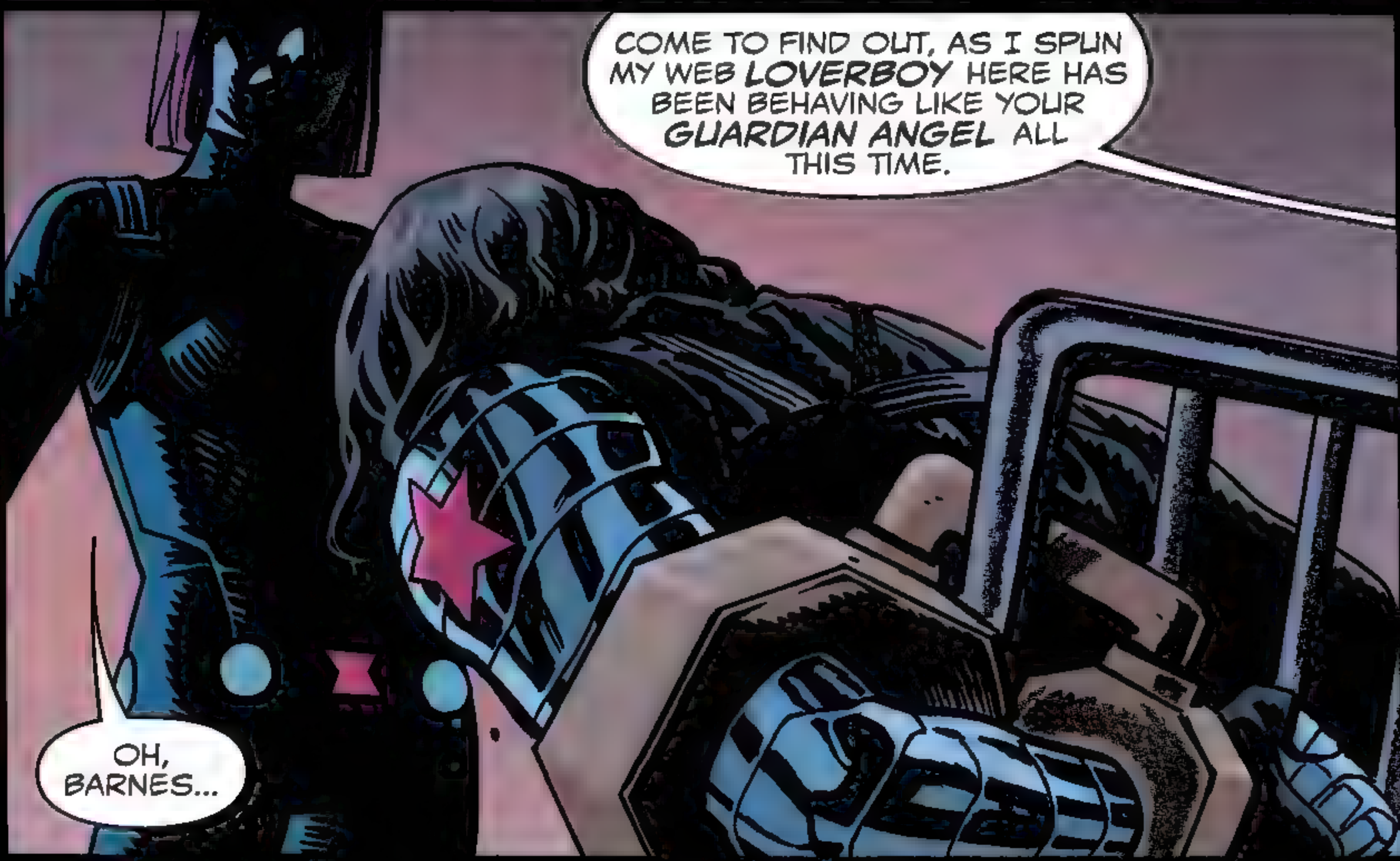


SORRY, TASHA.

I AM SERIOUSLY OFF-MISSION--



QUIET!



COME TO FIND OUT, AS I SPUN MY WEB **LOVERBOY** HERE HAS BEEN BEHAVING LIKE YOUR **GUARDIAN ANGEL** ALL THIS TIME.

OH, BARNES...

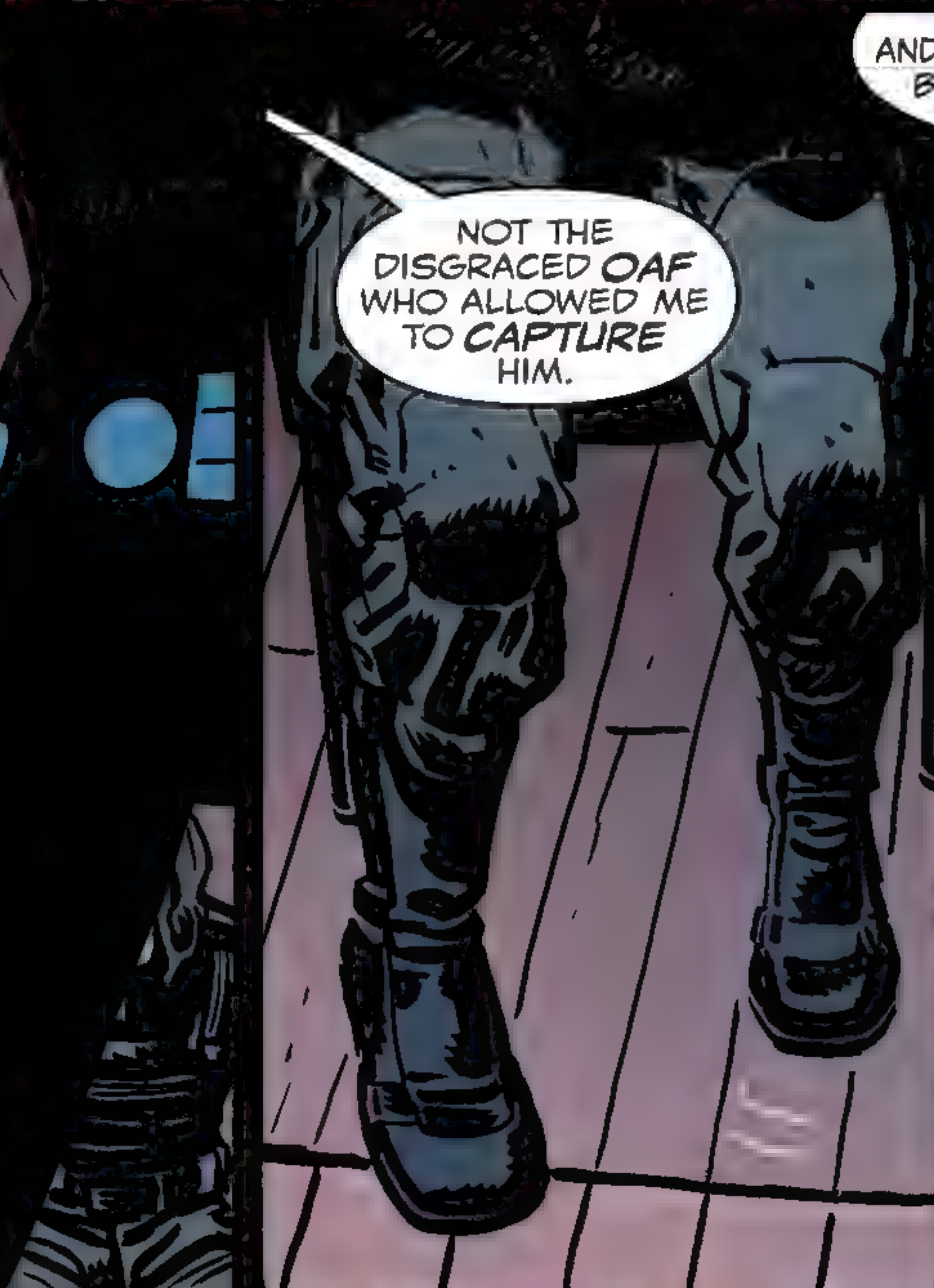
AH. PILLOW TALK. I CAN TELL FROM YOUR EXPRESSION THAT THIS COMES AS A SHOCK.

GIVEN YOUR **HISTORY**, I'M SURPRISED YOU TWO AREN'T MORE... **COMMUNICATIVE**.



HERE WE ARE, THE THREE OF US... ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE **RED ROOM**.

AND I SWEAR TO YOU, ONLY ONE OF US WILL WALK OUT.



NOT THE **DISGRACED OAF** WHO ALLOWED ME TO **CAPTURE** HIM.



AND NOT THE **TRAITOR** WHO MURDERED OUR BELOVED **TEACHER** AND THEN TURNED HER BACK ON ME.

ULTIMATELY, NATASHA, ONLY **ONE** SPIDER EMERGES DOMINANT FROM THE RUBBLE OF THE **RED ROOM**... AND IT WON'T BE YOU.

YOU, THEN?

YOU, WHO LED ME INTO **IOSEF'S CABIN**...



...A PLACE WHOSE SECRETS I KNOW?

JAMES!



CHUNK



CHUNK















I CAN'T
HOLD HER
LONG! STING
HER, FULL
POWER!

DO
IT!



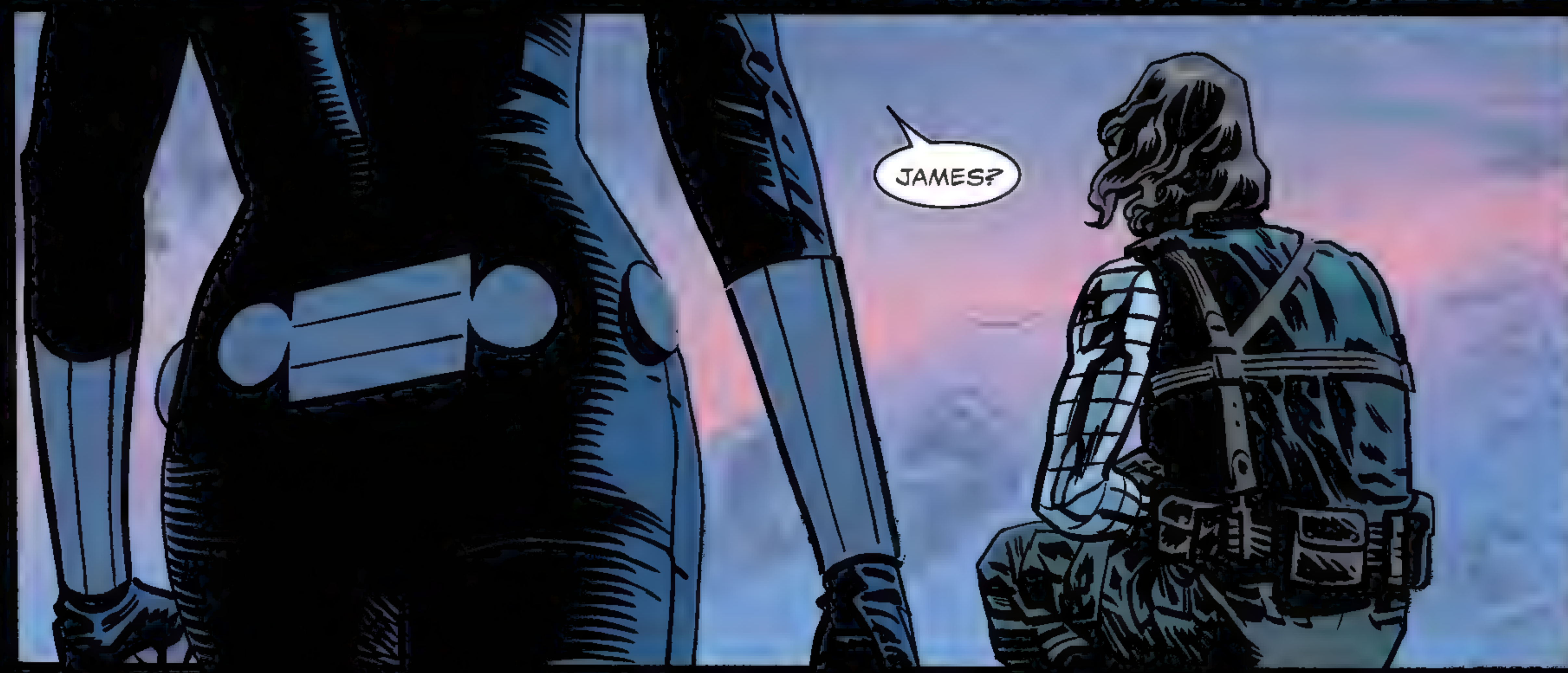
SOME
ARM YOU
HAVE ON YOU,
BARNES.

TOO BAD
IT'S NOT BETTER
AT HOLDING
THINGS.



ANOTHER
TIME,
COMRADE.



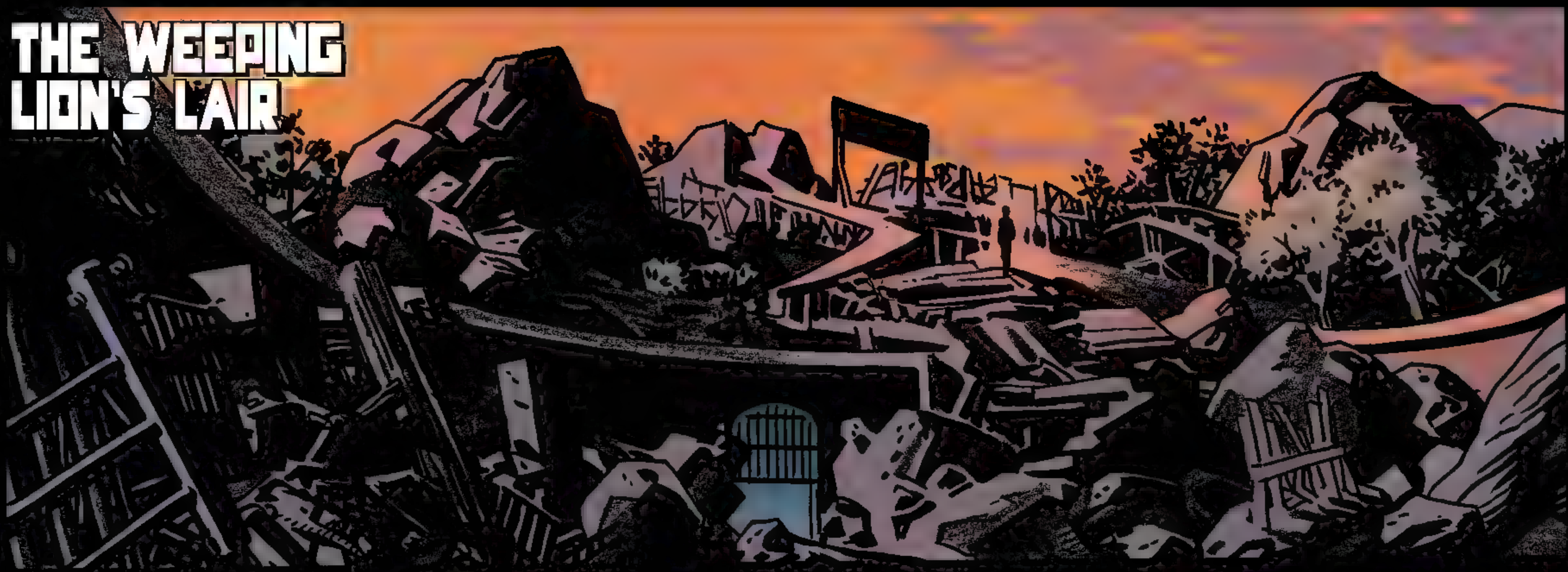


THERE
IS.

**NICK
FURY** WOULD
LIKE A WORD
WITH YOU,
NAT.

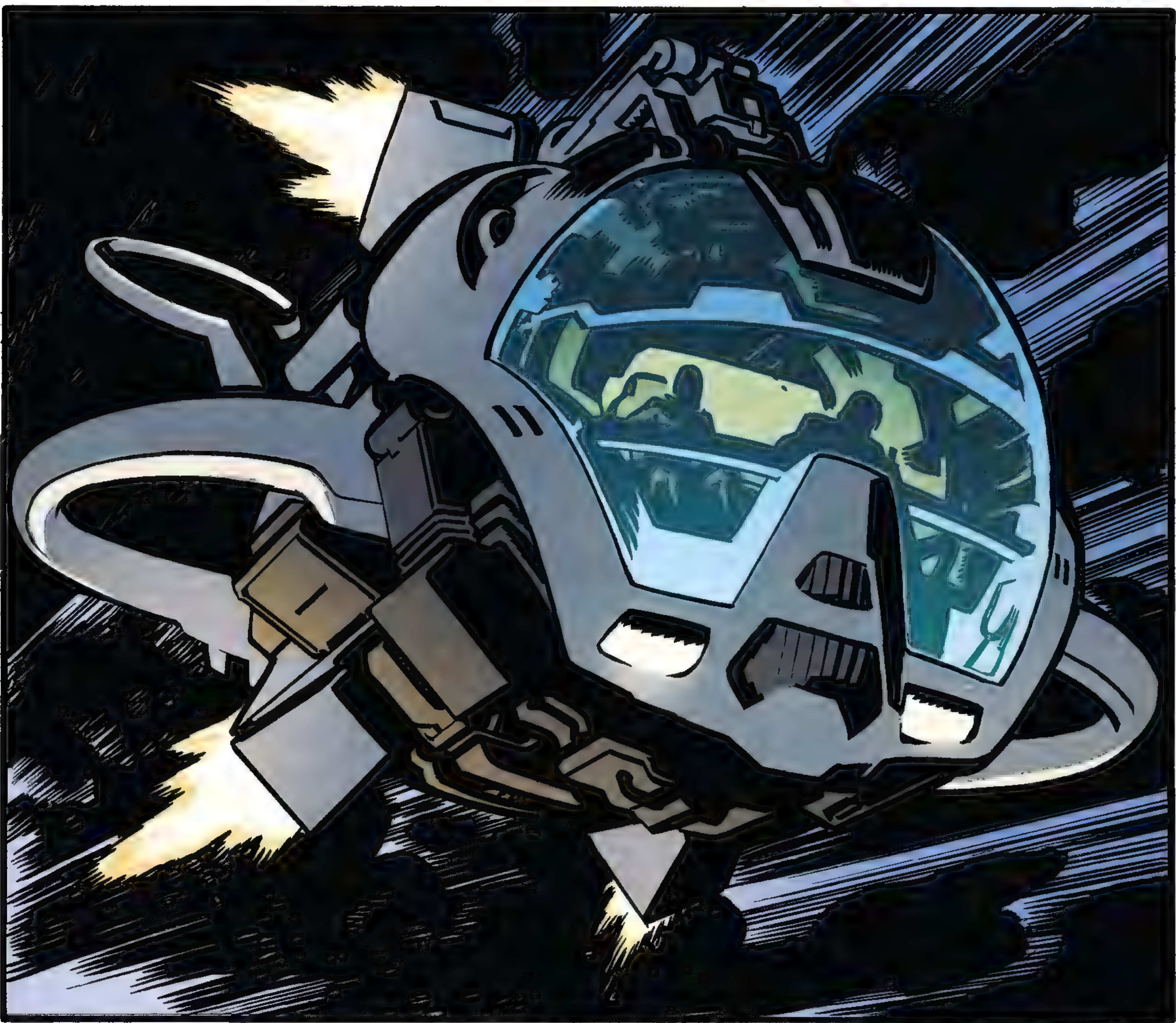


THE WEEPING LION'S LAIR





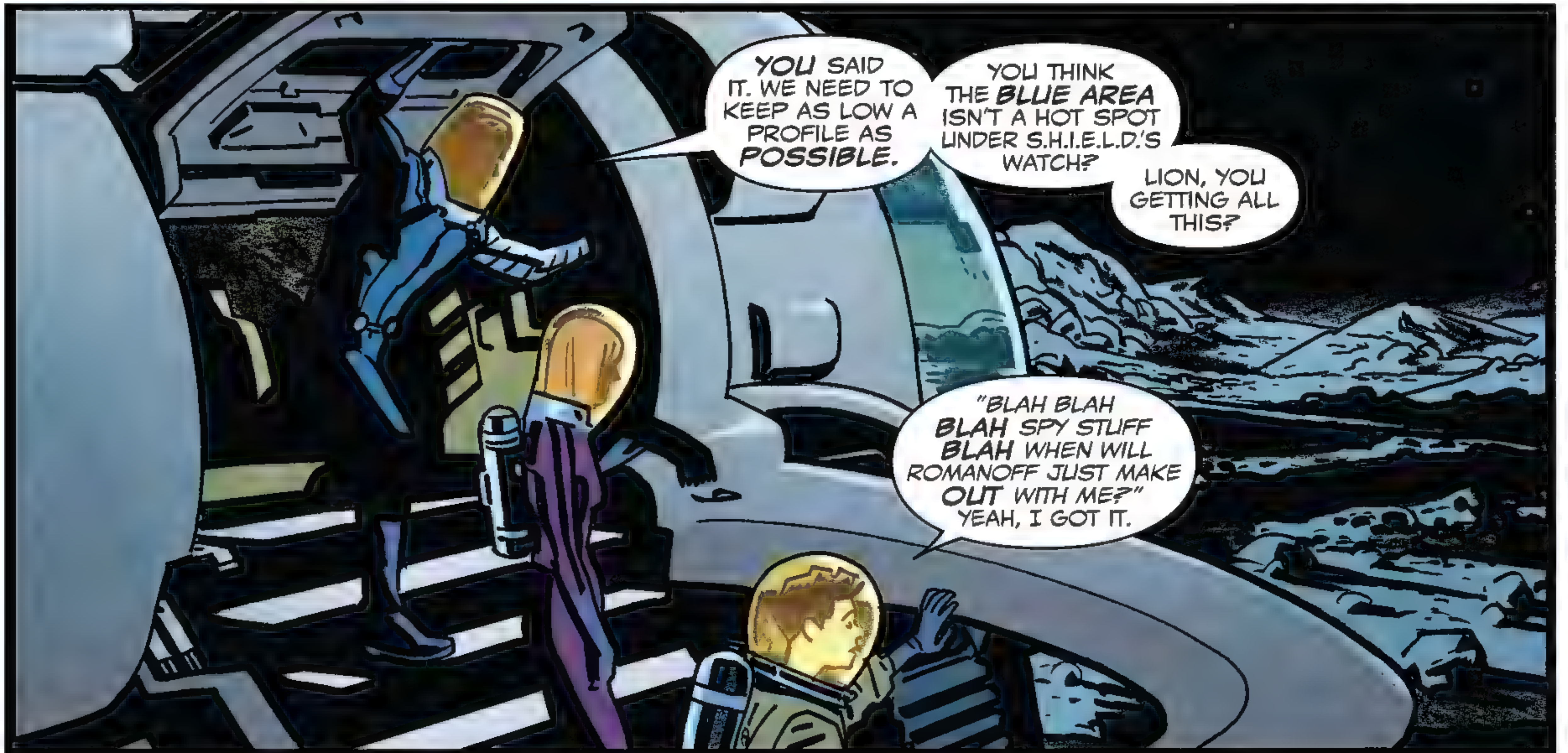








THERE IS A LOT OF MOON HERE. YOU COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN US ANY CLOSER?



YOU SAID IT. WE NEED TO KEEP AS LOW A PROFILE AS POSSIBLE.

YOU THINK THE **BLUE AREA** ISN'T A HOT SPOT UNDER S.H.I.E.L.D.'S WATCH?

LION, YOU GETTING ALL THIS?

"BLAH BLAH BLAH SPY STUFF BLAH WHEN WILL ROMANOFF JUST MAKE OUT WITH ME?"
YEAH, I GOT IT.



YOU'RE CERTAIN HE'S HERE, THOUGH?

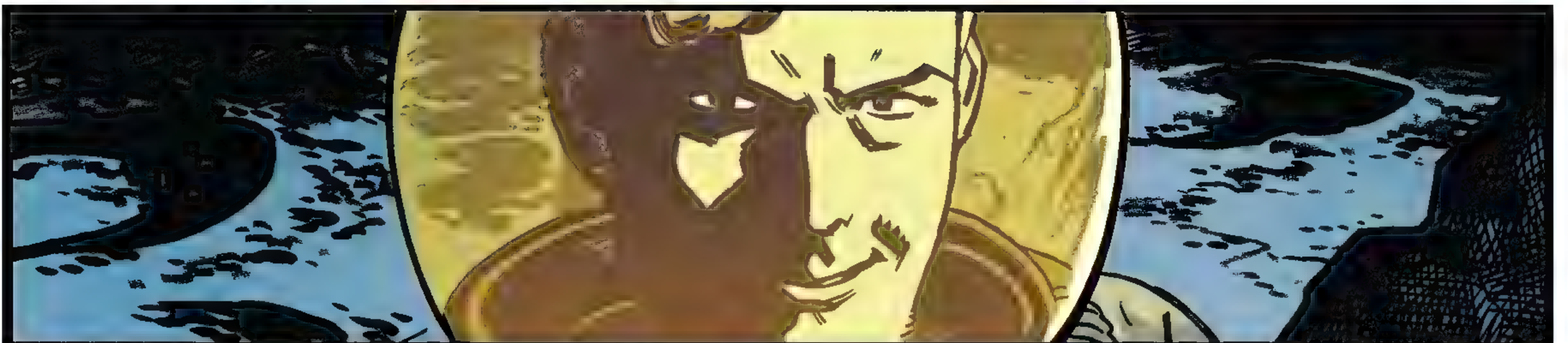
TRUST ME.
FOR ONCE.



JUST BE PREPARED, NAT. HE'S NOT THE SAME MAN WE ONCE KNEW.



I'LL TRY NOT TO HOLD THAT AGAINST HIM.





MAYBE I DON'T **NEED** TO POKE AROUND IN HIS BRAIN.

MAYBE WE COULD JUST, I DON'T KNOW, TALK TO HIM.

WHEN I WANT YOUR ADVICE, I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU. **KEEP UP.**

CLINK
SHFFF



EXCUSE ME FOR WANTING TO LOOK AROUND SINCE I'VE NEVER BEEN ON THE MOON BEFORE.

ARE YOU SURE WE'RE NOT GOING IN CIRCLES? HOW DO WE FIND THIS GUY?

WE DON'T.

CLINK

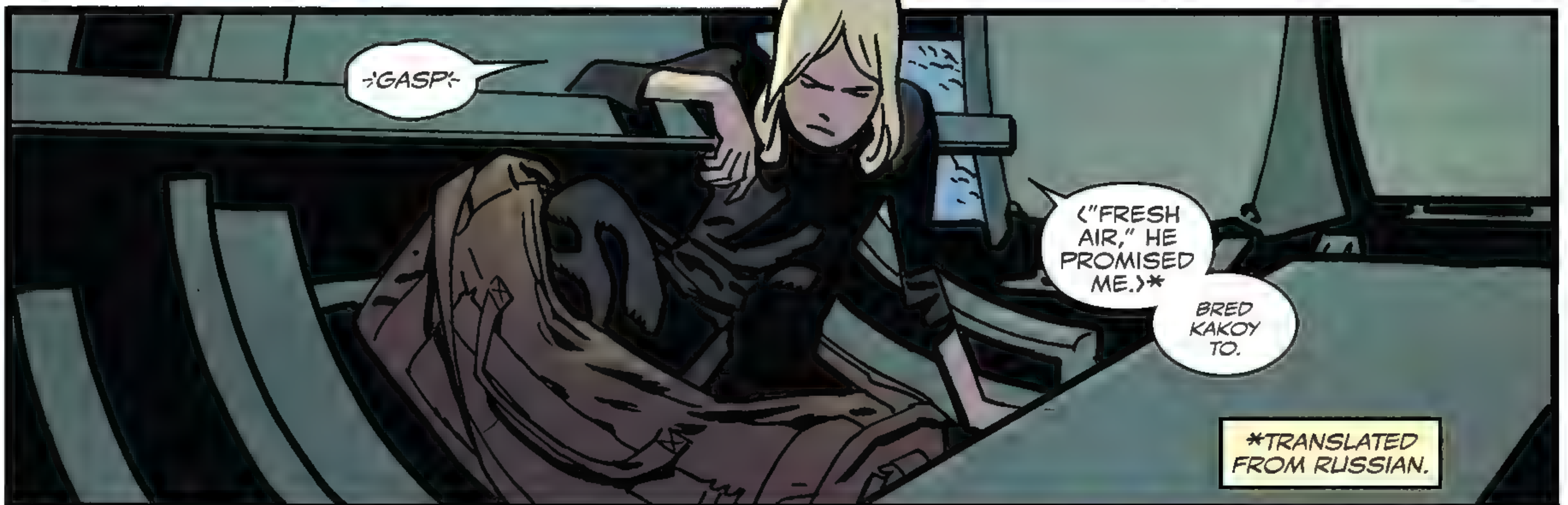


HE SEES EVERYTHING. LITERALLY EVERYTHING. THE MOMENT WE LANDED, I GUARANTEE HE STARTED APPROACHING.

SHFFF



ZZZZZZIP



GASP

"FRESH AIR," HE PROMISED ME.)*

BRED KAKOY TO.

*TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN.



OF COURSE.

THE SUSPENSE--

THE SUSPENSE IS--

CLINK
SHFFF

CLINK
SHFFF





CAN HE HEAR US?

OH, YEAH.



NICHOLAS, I DO NOT KNOW HOW...OR WHY...YOU'VE **BECOME**...WHATEVER IT IS YOU NOW ARE.

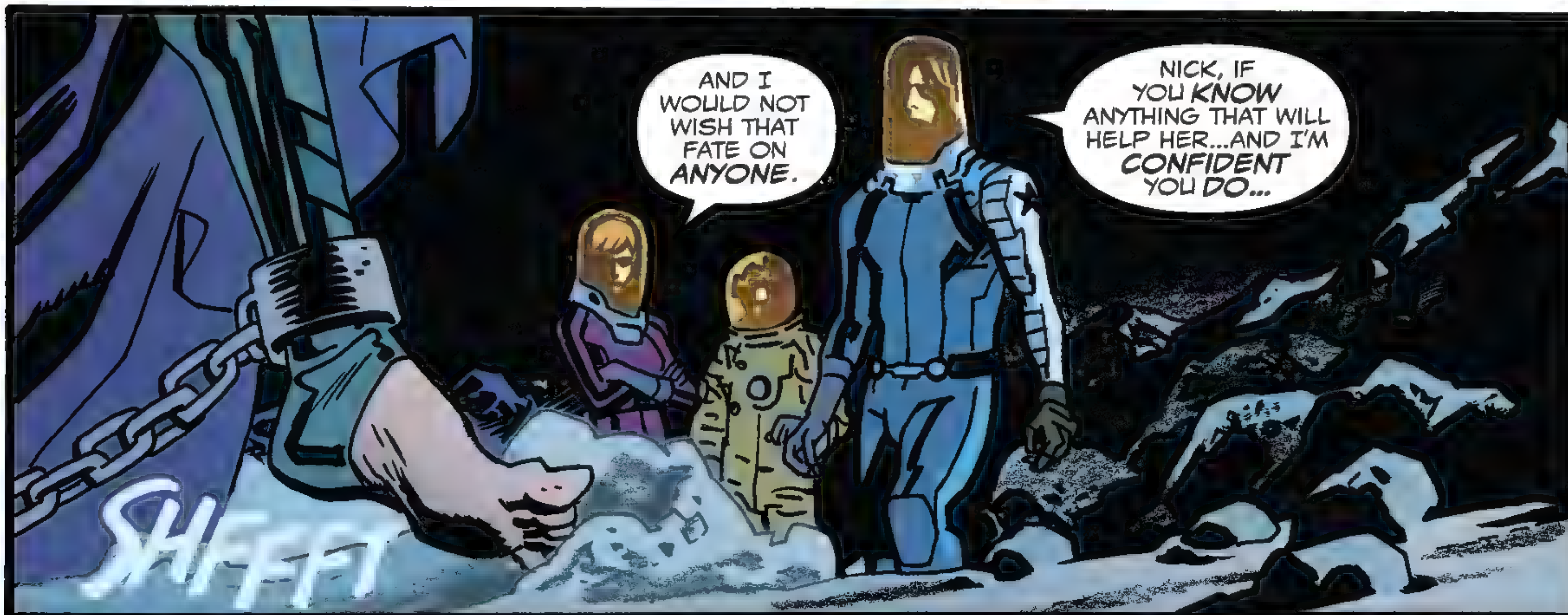
I HOPE IT WAS **WILLFUL** AND NOT...



NICK, JAMES SAID YOU...**ASKED** FOR ME. IN YOUR WAY. AND YOUR TIMING IS **FORTUITOUS**.

I AM IN THE MIDDLE--I HOPE IT'S AT **LEAST** THE MIDDLE--OF SAVING MANY, MANY LIVES--

--AND APPROXIMATELY HALF A DOZEN **SOULS**. LITTLE GIRLS, NICK--WARPED BY THE MODERN VERSION OF THE SAME **RED ROOM** WHERE I TRAINED.



AND I WOULD NOT WISH THAT FATE ON ANYONE.

NICK, IF YOU **KNOW** ANYTHING THAT WILL HELP HER...AND I'M **CONFIDENT** YOU DO...

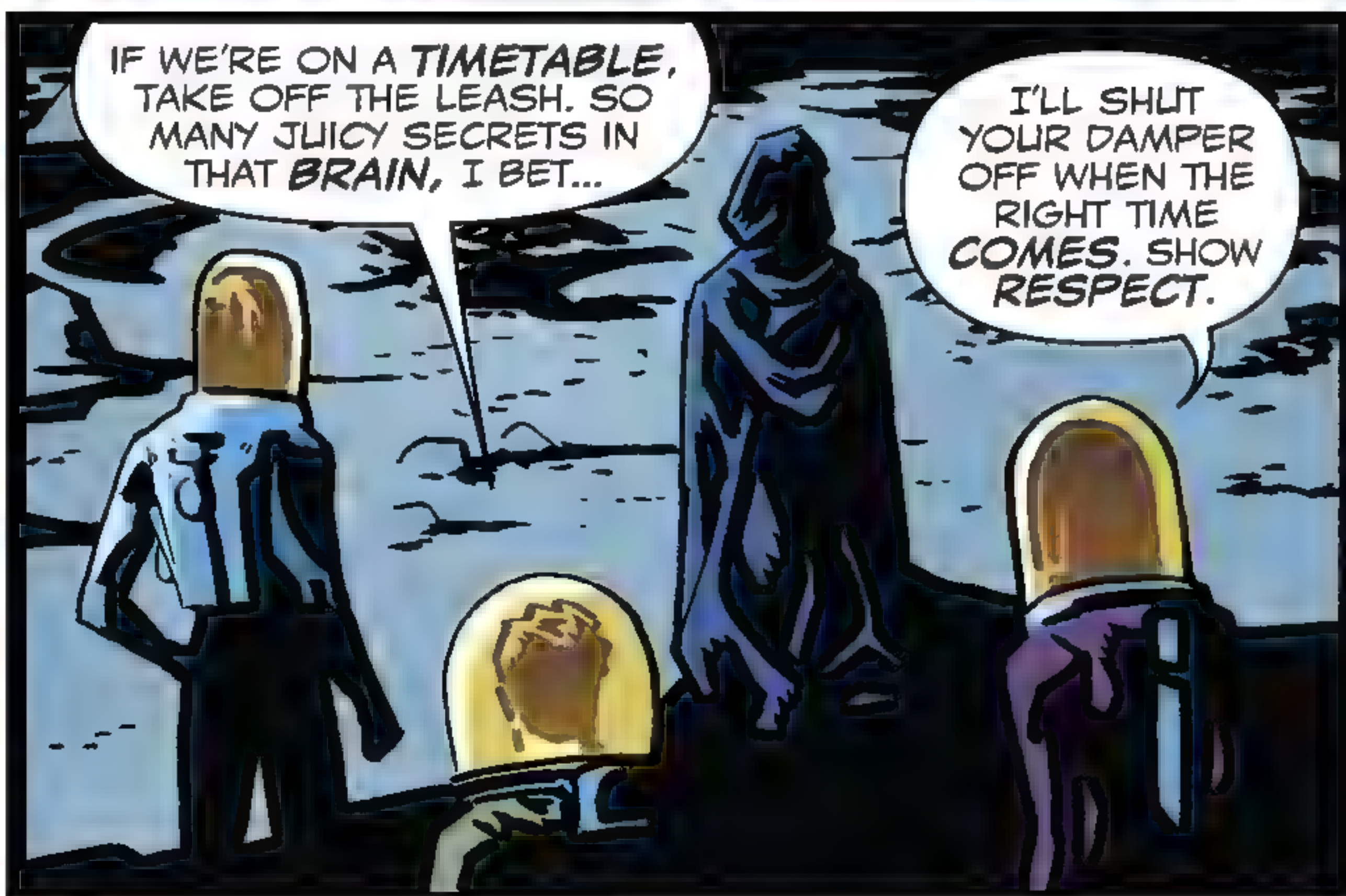


THEN, PLEASE.

SURELY WE DIDN'T COME ALL THIS WAY FOR **NOTHING**.



(NOW TO
PICK UP
LION AND **DITCH**
THOSE TWO
LOSERS...)



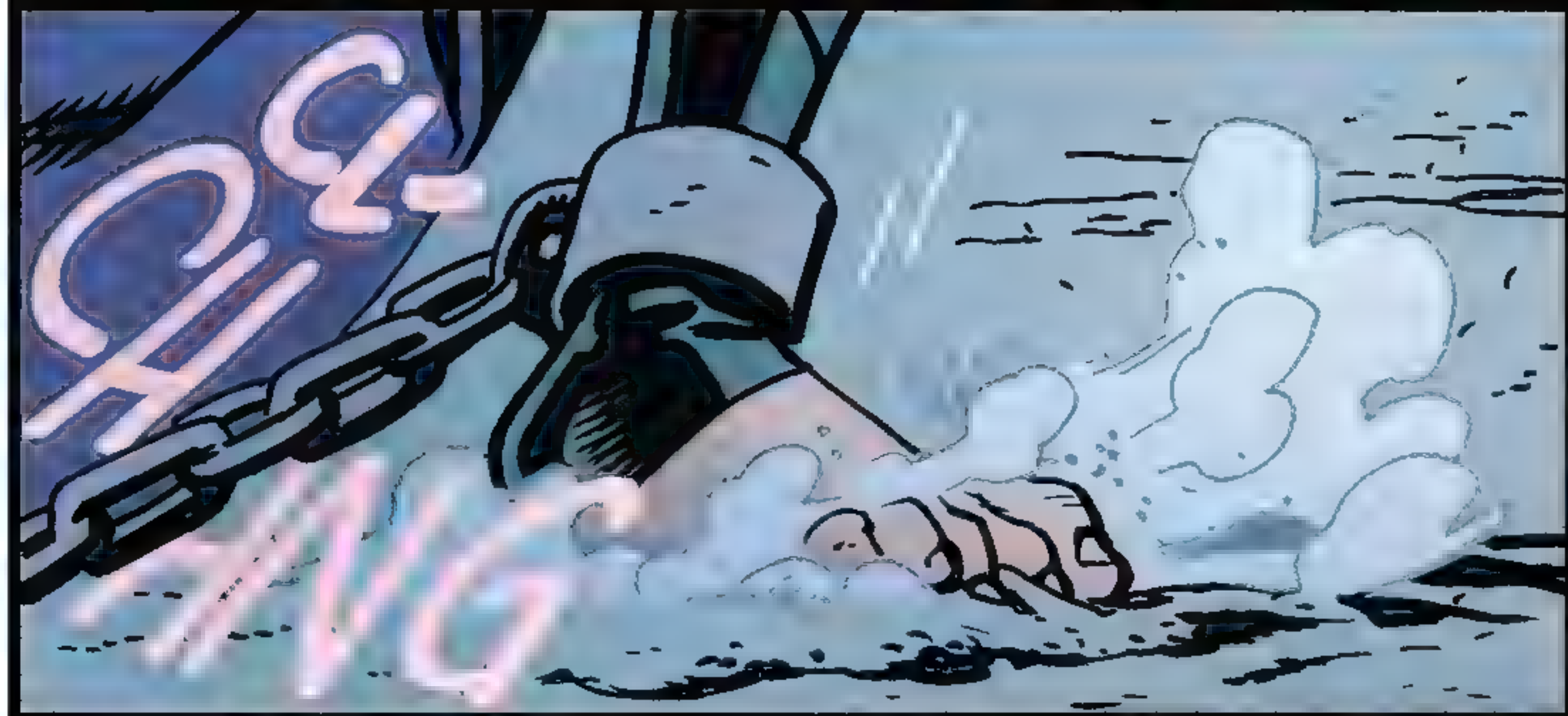
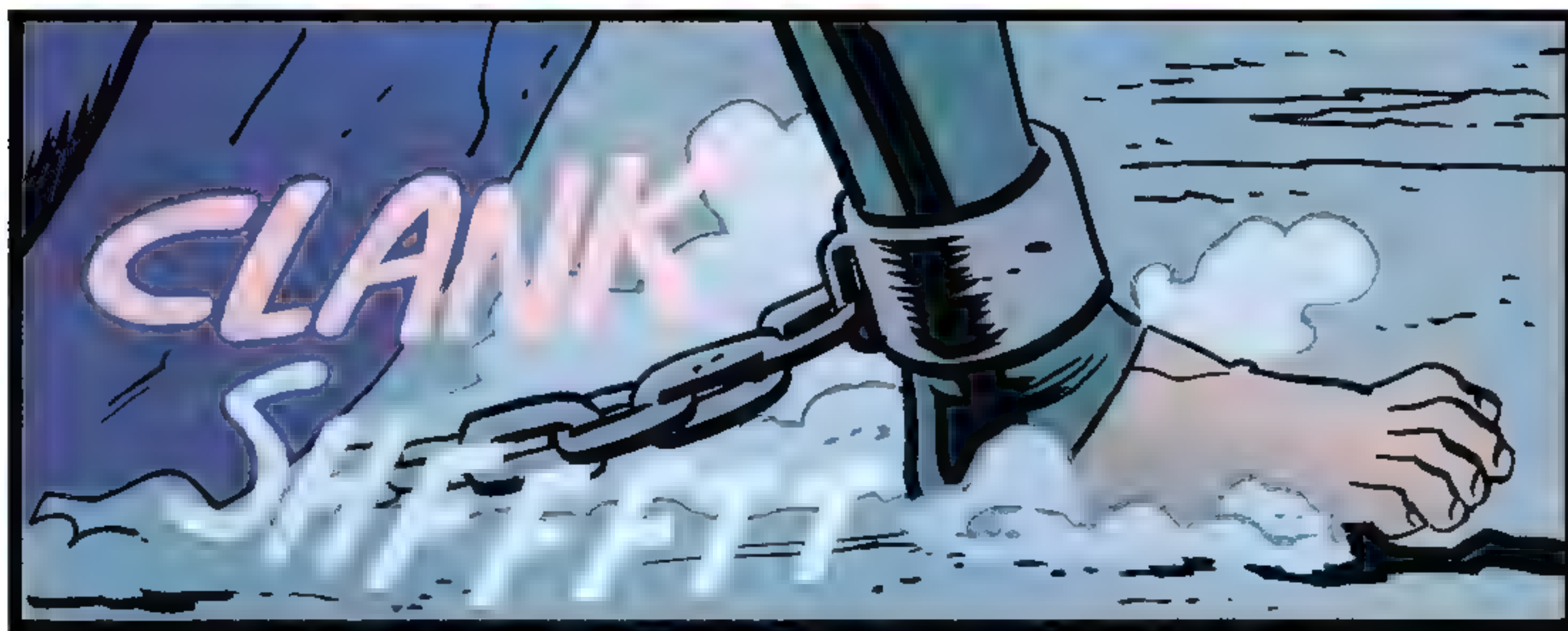
IF WE'RE ON A **TIMETABLE**,
TAKE OFF THE LEASH. SO
MANY JUICY SECRETS IN
THAT **BRAIN**, I BET...

I'LL SHUT
YOUR DAMPER
OFF WHEN THE
RIGHT TIME
COMES. SHOW
RESPECT.



NICK, IF
YOU HAVE INTEL
TO GIVE, I NEED
IT. NOW.

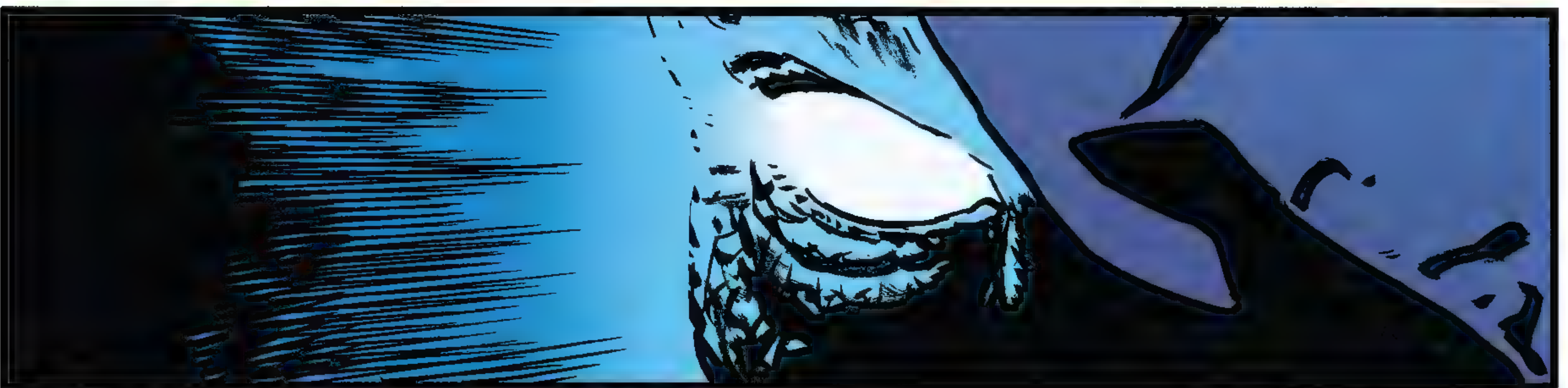
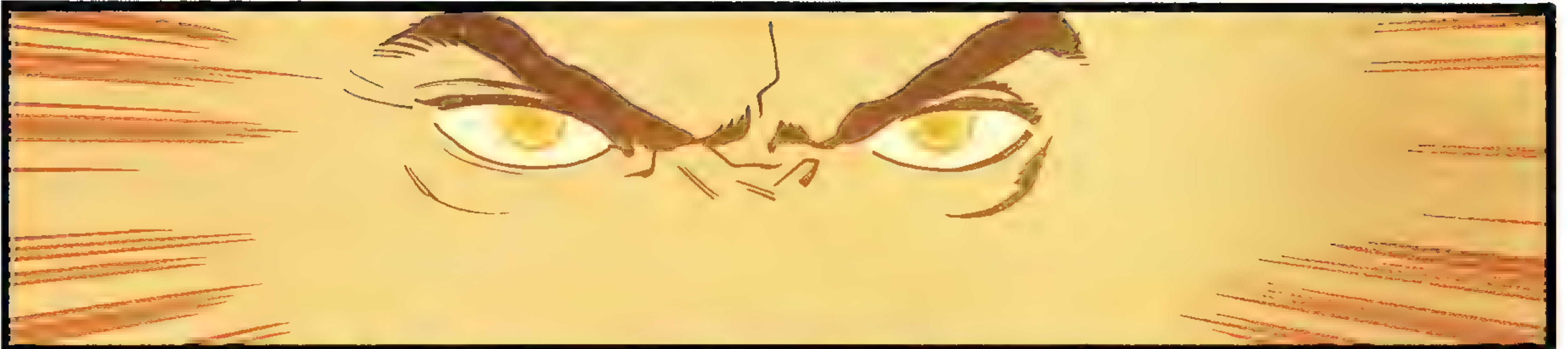
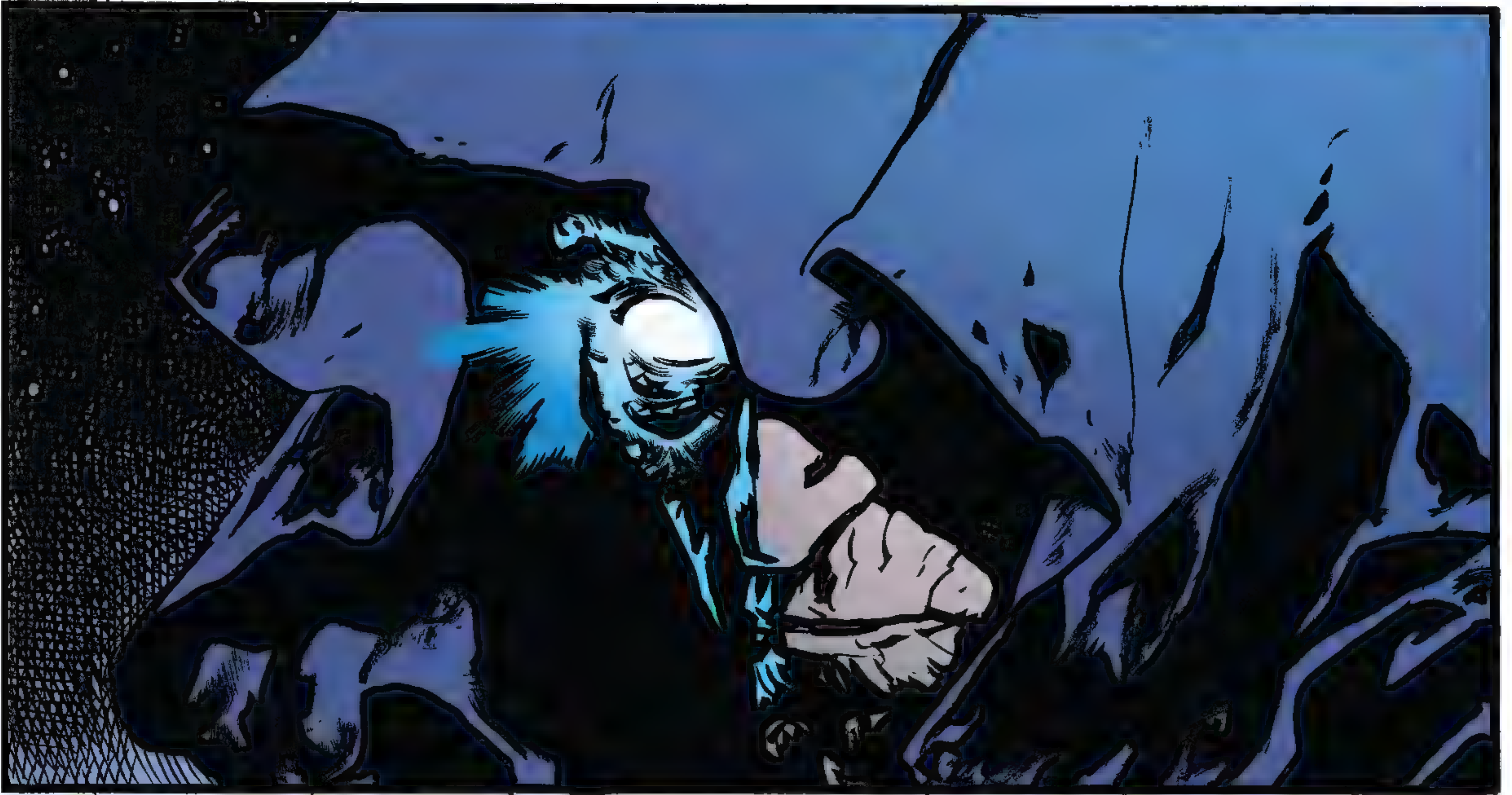
DON'T PLAY
GAMES WITH
ME. **PLEASE**. WE
WERE **FRIENDS**
ONCE.

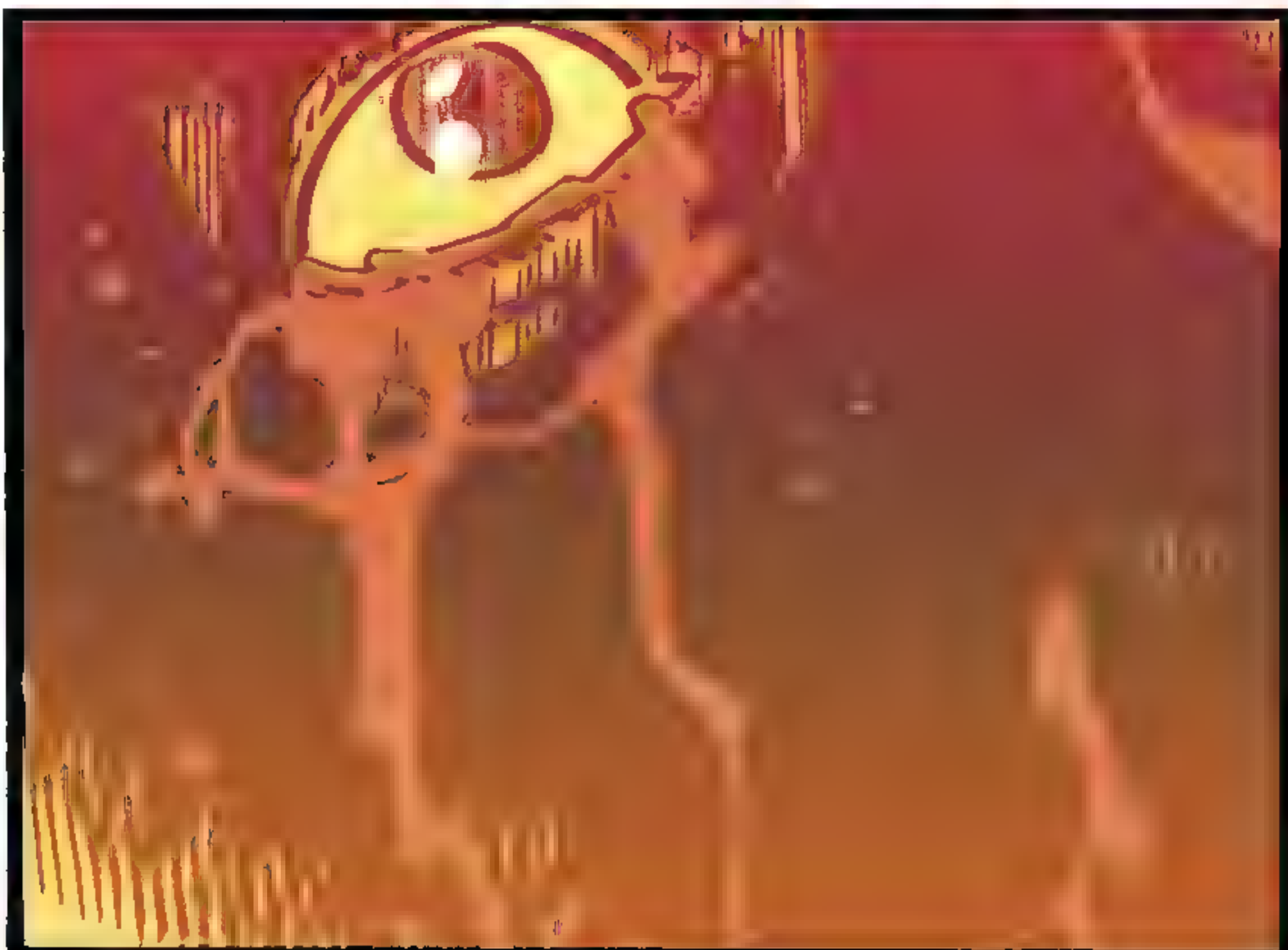


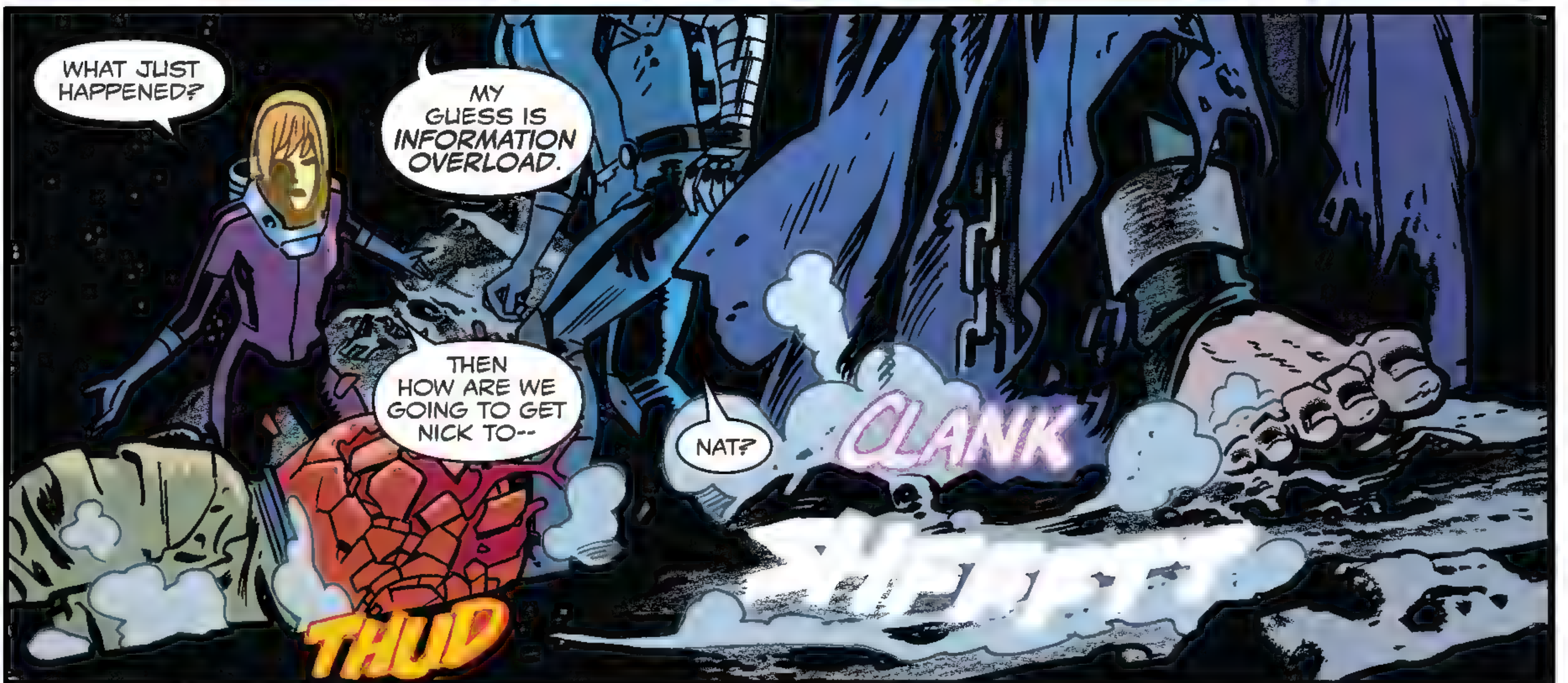
HOLD IT
RIGHT THERE,
CHRISTMAS
FUTURE!



LION,
NO!













JAMES...
LET ME DO
THIS.

AFTER ALL
YOU'VE DONE
FOR ME THESE
LAST FEW
WEEKS.

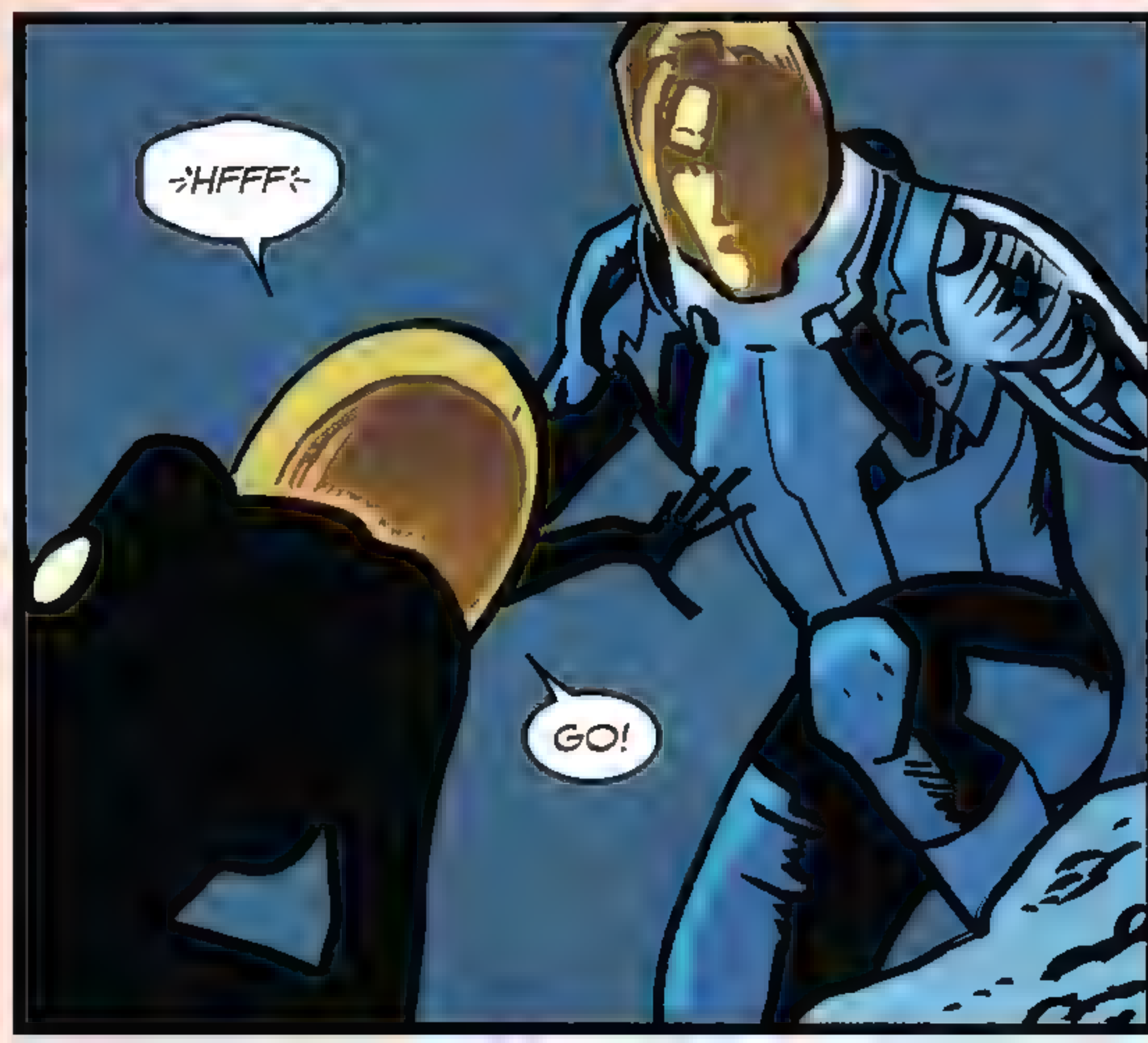


IOSEF?
A MUTUAL
FRIEND NEEDS
A HAND...



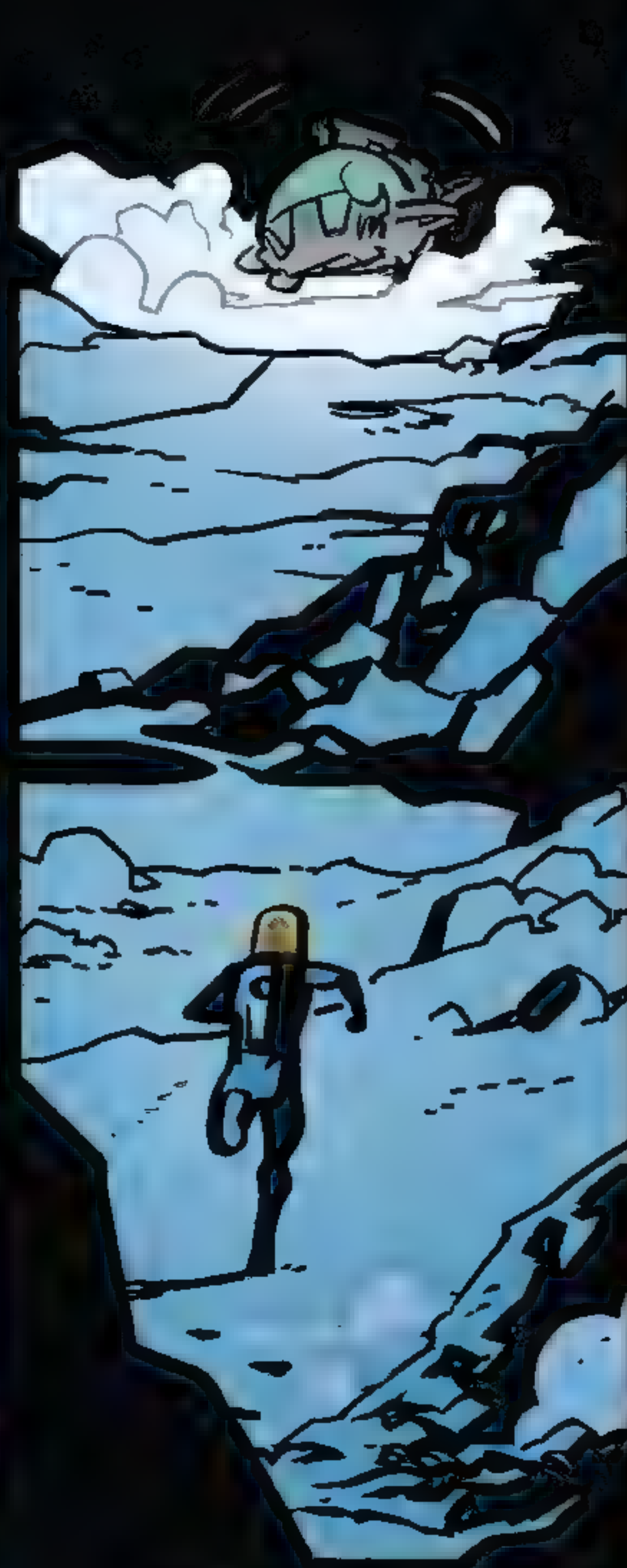
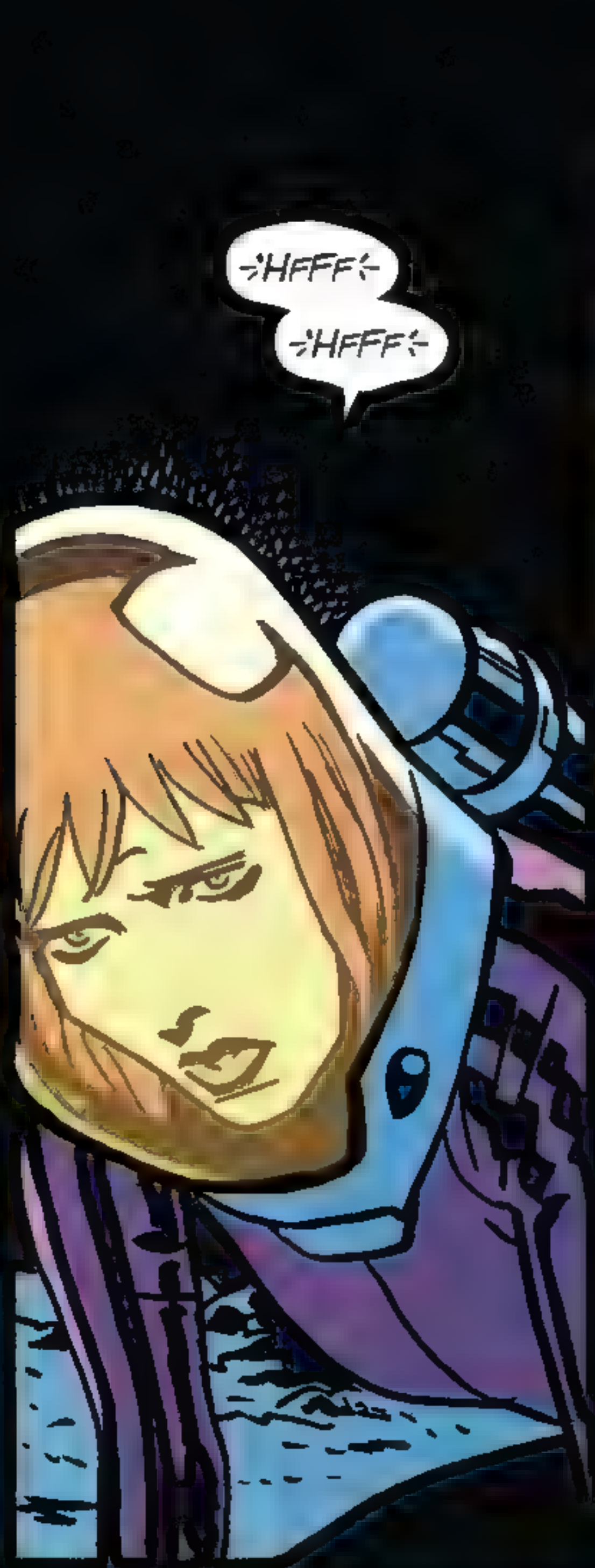
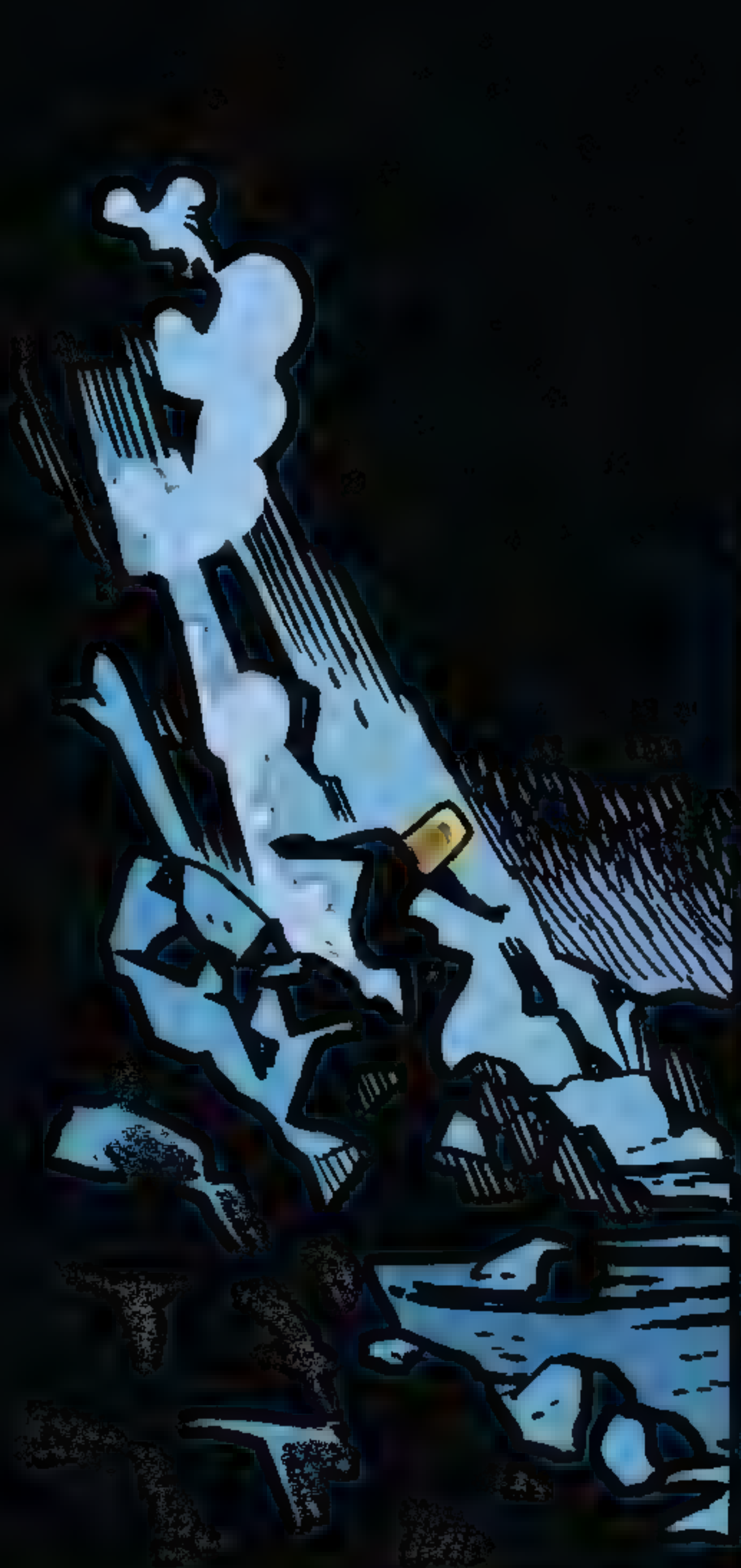
MY
TURN...

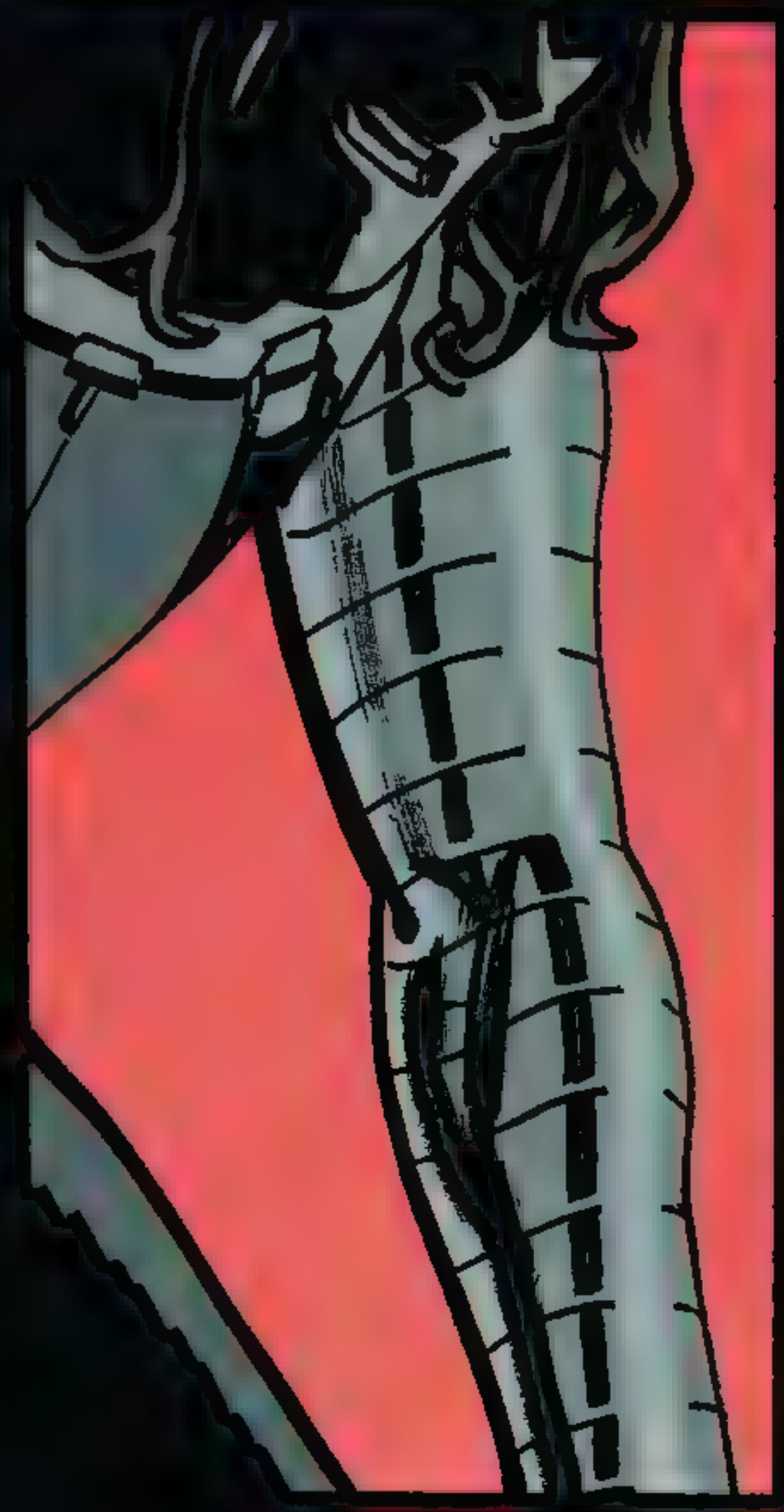
...TO
BE THE
SAVIOR...

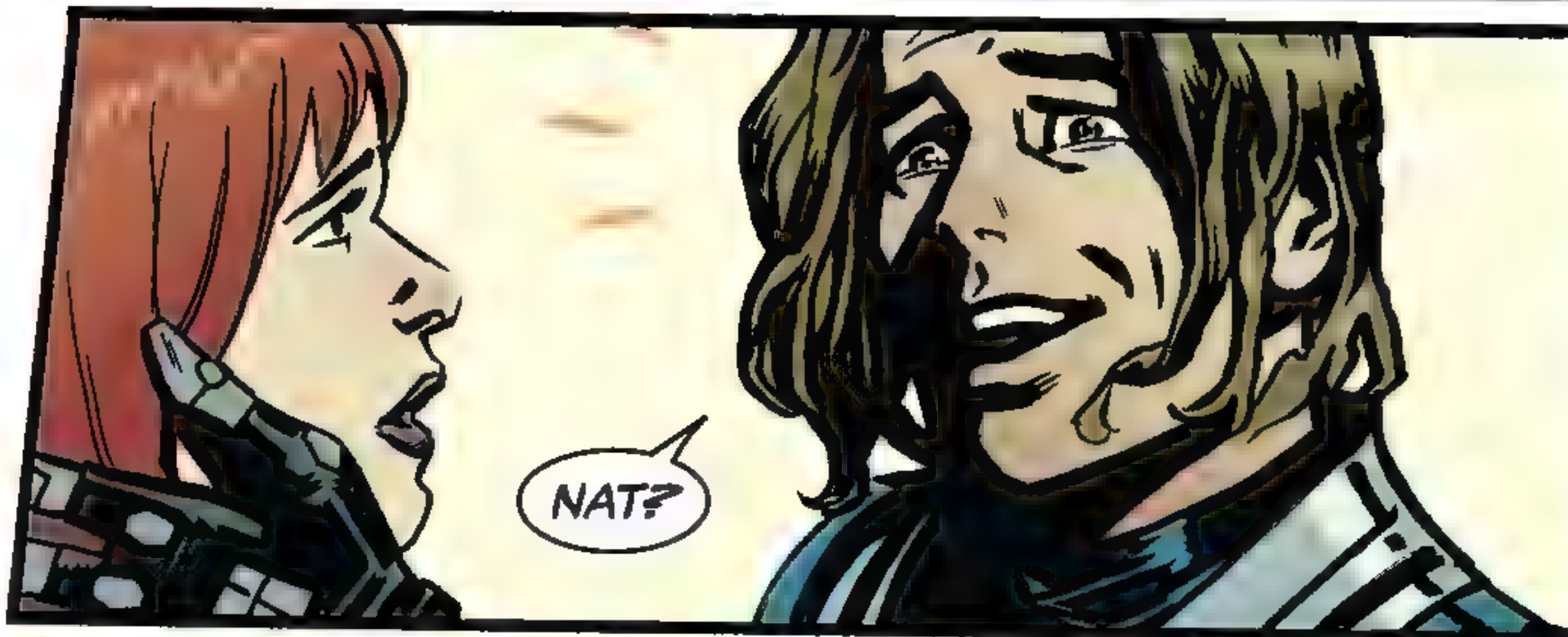
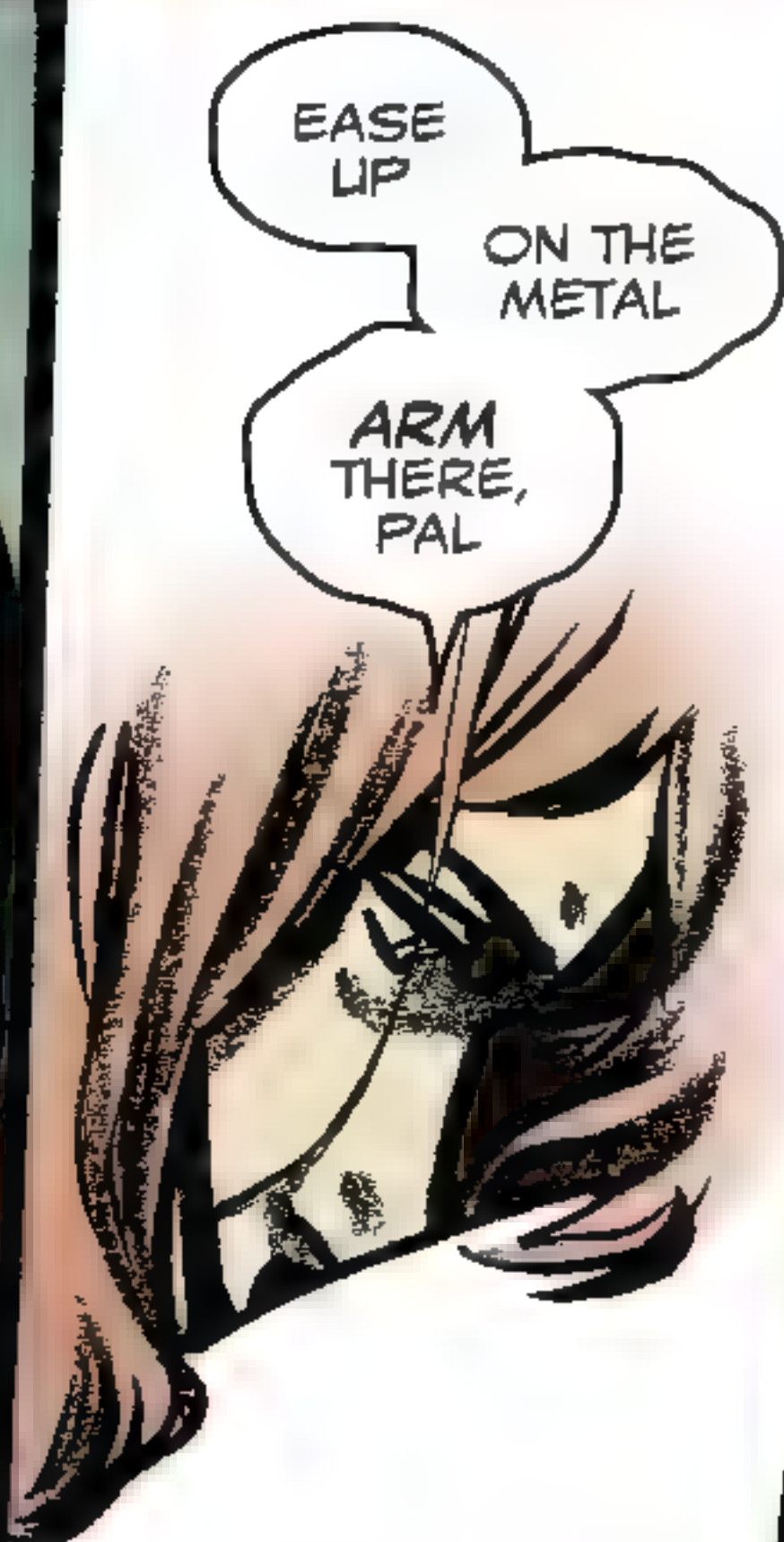


~HFFF~

GO!









SO CAN WE LEAVE NOW?

QUIET, MINI-ME.



THE WAY...THE WAY YOU CALLED ME "JAMES" AGAIN...

NAT, DID THE LION GIVE YOU BACK THE KNOWLEDGE OF OLD?

YAWN.



IT DOESN'T MATTER.

BUT NOT EVEN YOU CAN KEEP SECRETS FROM ME.



NOW, STRAP IN AND TELL ME WHERE TO DROP YOU.

"DROP"...? I THOUGHT--



STOP PINING, SCHOOLBOY.

I HAVE A JOB TO DO--

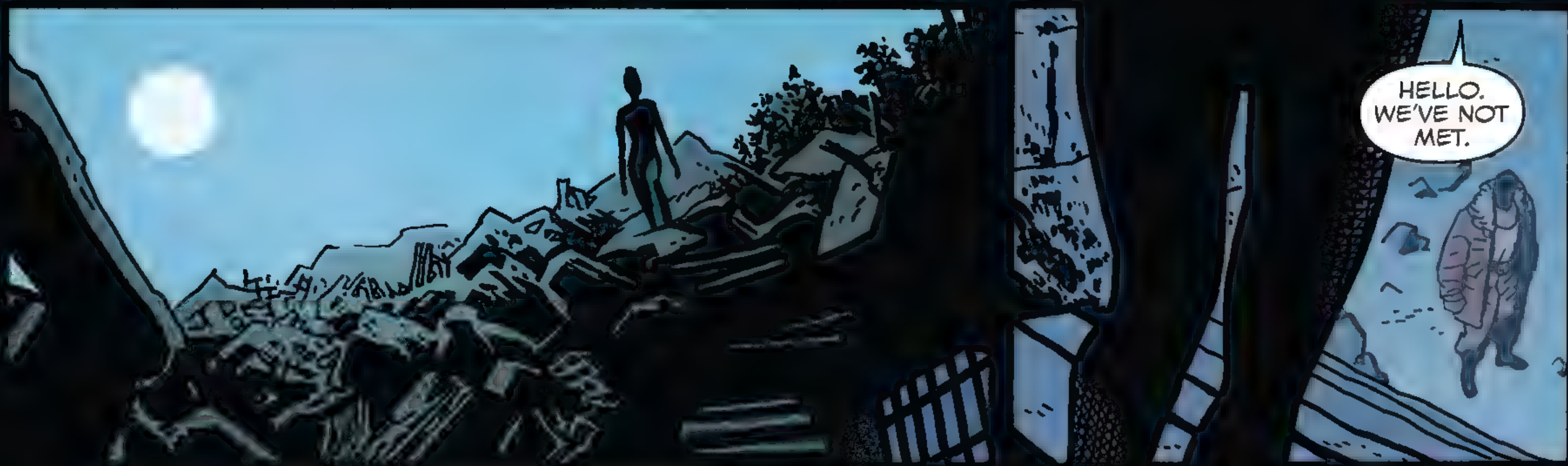


--AND ROMANCE IS NOT ON THE DOCKET.



DON'T WORRY, BARNES.

WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE THE MOON.



HELLO.
WE'VE NOT
MET.



BUT WE HAVE A COMMON **ENEMY**:
NATASHA ROMANOFF, A.K.A. THE
BLACK WIDOW.

I SUGGEST
YOU LET ME
HANDLE HER.



TO DO
SO, I WILL NEED
TO RECLAIM MY
GIRLS HERE.

SO IF
YOU WOULD
BE SO
KIND...



OH, MY.
I DO
LOVE STRONG,
SILENT MEN.



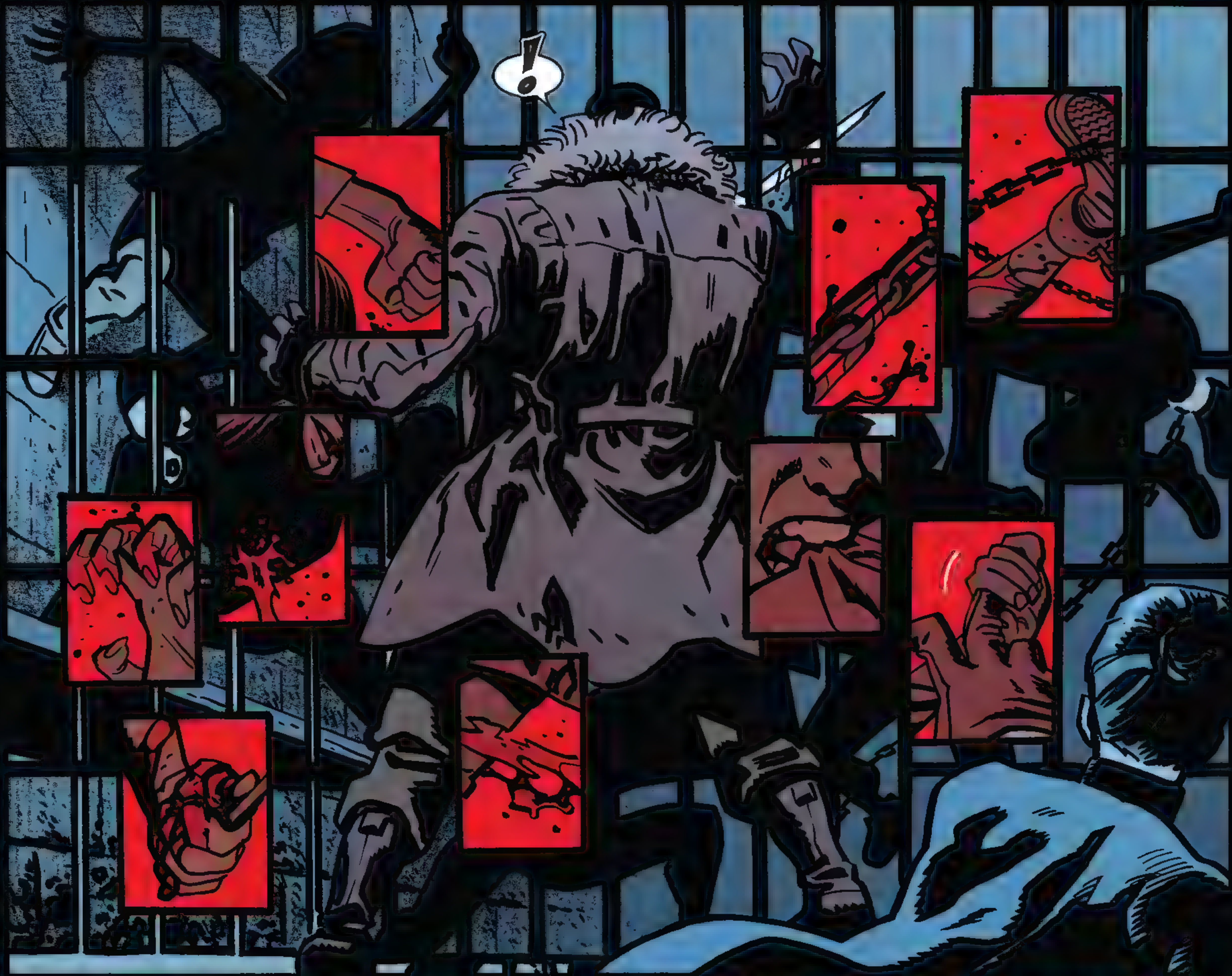
COME
HERE. COME
TO ME.



LET ME
GIVE YOU A
KISS.







SPASIBO,
GIRLS. I APOLOGIZE
THAT IT'S TAKEN SO LONG
TO FIND YOU. I'VE BEEN
SEARCHING EVER
SO LONG.

OUR
HEADMISTRESS,
I REGRET TO
REPORT, IS GONE---
MURDERED BY
THE WIDOW---

--BUT IN
THE PAIN OF
LONELINESS,
IT GIVES ME SUCH
COMFORT TO SEE
THE REST OF MY
FAMILY AGAIN.

CLICK

THANK
YOU FOR
SAVING ME,
LITTLE
ONES.





BUILT IN THE
1960s--

--ORIGINALLY
AN ABANDONED
AMERICAN/RUSSIAN
FACILITY--

--CODENAMED,
OF ALL THINGS,
"FRIENDSHIP"--

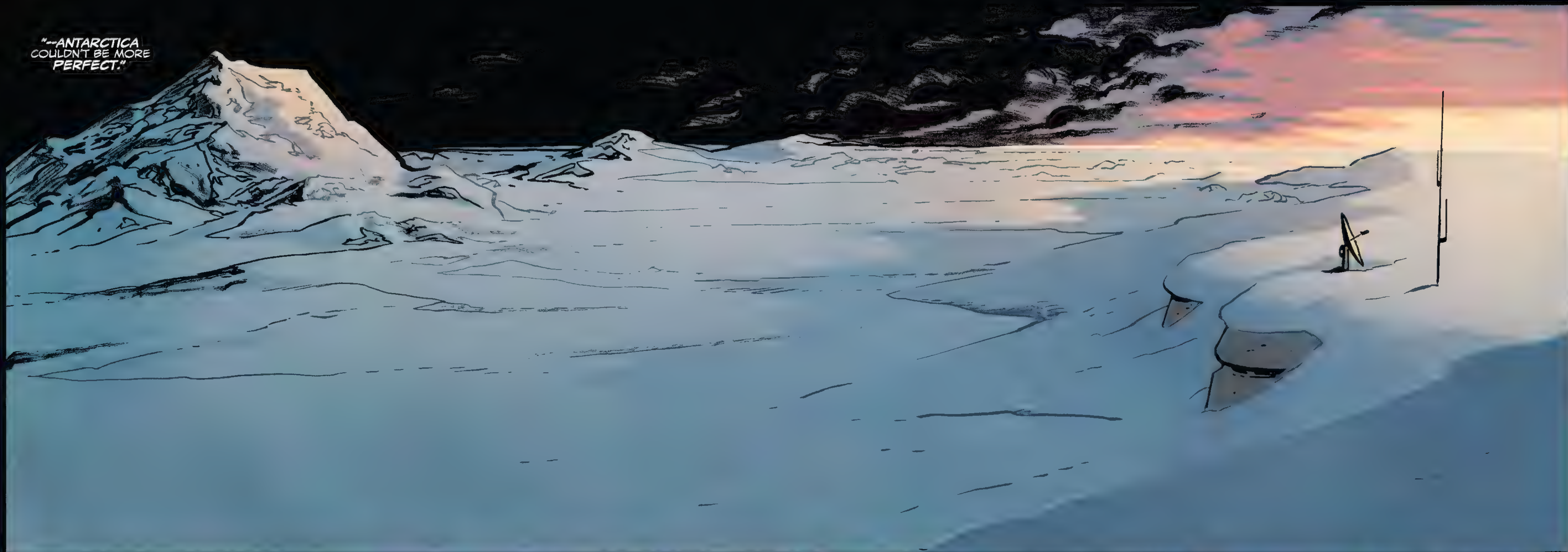
--TOTALLY
UPDATED TO
MEET S.H.I.E.L.D.'S
NEEDS.

NORMALLY,
OF COURSE,
WE'D BUILD OUR
OWN INSTALLATION
FROM **SCRATCH**,
BUT--

--AS
YOU'VE

LOCALE--

"--ANTARCTICA
COULDN'T BE MORE
PERFECT."



CHILLY IN
HERE, IT MUST
BE DIFFICULT
TO HEAT.

CONTROLLED
NUCLEAR
REACTOR.

DON'T
WORRY! IT'S
PERFECTLY
SAFE!

I'M SORRY.
I'M BABBLING.
IT'S JUST THAT IT'S
NOT OFTEN WE HOST
AN INSPECTOR
FROM THE MAIN
OFFICE.

TRUTH TO
TELL, IT'S
RATHER DULL
DOWN HERE.

THAT'S A
GOOD THING,
YES? DO YOU EVER
THINK ABOUT HOW
MUCH POWER
THIS FACILITY
HOLDS?

YOU'RE
JOKING, RIGHT?
SKELETON STAFF, BUT IT
KEEPS US ALL UP AT NIGHT.
WE'RE S.H.I.E.L.D.'S ULTIMATE
FAIL-SAFE AGAINST BEING
OVERRUN. THAT'S
STRESSFUL--

--B-BUT
STILL 100%
FUNCTIONAL, AS
I'M SURE YOUR
REPORT WILL
SHOW.

IF ORDERED,
WITH THE TURN OF
SOME KEYS, YOU
HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO
OBLITERATE S.H.I.E.L.D.
INSTANTLY AND
PERMANENTLY.

ALL DATA
DESTROYED
WORLDWIDE, ALL AGENTS
LEFT IN THE COLD, ALL
COMMUNICATION PIPELINES
AND TRANSPORT
SHUT DOWN.

IMAGINE
THIS OUTPOST
FALLING INTO THE
WRONG HANDS.

KSP LANG









?
YOU--YOU COVERED ME!
YOU SAVED MY LIFE--

I'VE DONE **BIGGER** FAVORS FOR S.H.I.E.L.D.

STILL, MAYBE IT'S WORTH SOME **INTEL** ON THESE **KEYS**?



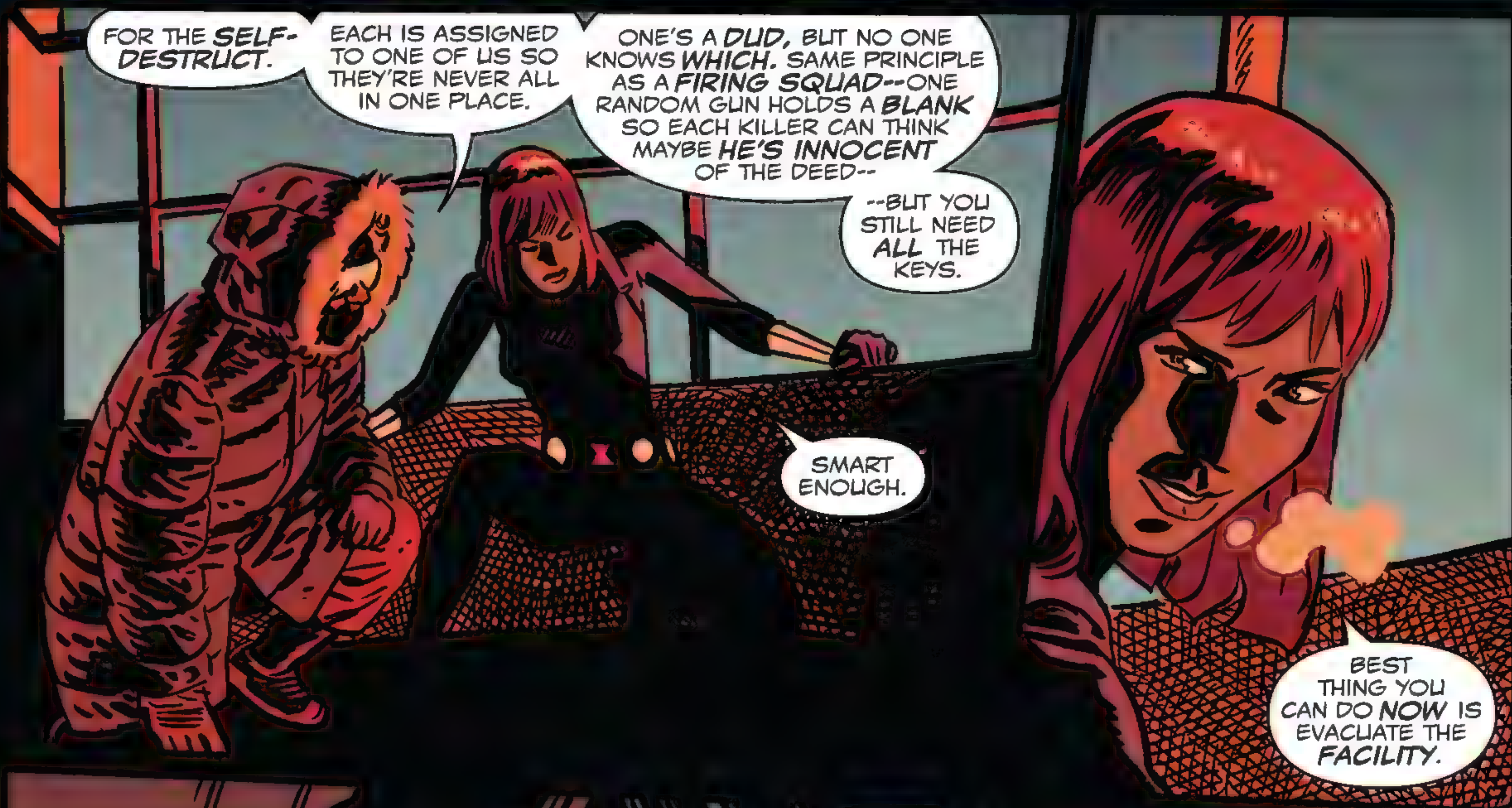
FOR THE **SELF-DESTRUCT**.

EACH IS ASSIGNED TO ONE OF US SO THEY'RE NEVER ALL IN ONE PLACE.

ONE'S A **DUD**, BUT NO ONE KNOWS **WHICH**. SAME PRINCIPLE AS A **FIRING SQUAD**--ONE RANDOM GUN HOLDS A **BLANK** SO EACH KILLER CAN THINK MAYBE **HE'S INNOCENT** OF THE DEED--

--BUT YOU STILL NEED **ALL** THE **KEYS**.

SMART ENOUGH.



BEST THING YOU CAN DO **NOW** IS EVACUATE THE **FACILITY**.

ASAP.





(YOU FOOL! YOU'VE
LEFT YOURSELF
COMPLETELY
OPEN!)

(OLD WOMAN,
LOOK AT ME!
LOOK IN THE FACE
OF YOUR
DEATH!)

GOD...
YOU'RE SO
YOUNG...

-SIGH-

?

(YOU ARE
ADORABLE.)

ZZZTKKT







(YOU HAVE A KEY, ALSO? DO YOU NOT REALIZE THE--)

(HOW DID YOU GET DOWN HERE? HOW?)

KKKCKK

(I'LL DIE... BEFORE I SAY...!)

BLACK WIDOW! WAIT!



YOU HAVE TO STOP THE OTHERS! THERE ARE SIX KEYS TOTAL THAT HAVE TO BE TURNED SIMULTANEOUSLY--



--OH, MY GOD, WAS THIS NOT THE KIND OF DAY I WAS EXPECTING--

--AND THOSE GIRLS--



--SIX GIRLS, SIX KEYS. OF COURSE. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS ROUND THEM ALL UP TO MAKE CERTAIN S.H.I.E.L.D. DOESN'T IMplode.

PIECE OF--



TEAKK











CHYORT...
(LITTLE ONE, YOU'RE BEING USED.)



(I DO NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN HURTING ANY OF YOU. IT NEED NOT END FOR YOU LIKE THIS.)

(IT NEED NOT END AT ALL, YOU PATHETIC HAS-BEEN. I NEED WHAT THIS MAN HAS.)



(I AM TRYING TO SAVE YOU.)

(YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TOLD HOW HIGH THE STAKES ARE IN THIS GAME.)

(TAKE ONE MORE STEP AND I OPEN HIS LUNG.)



(I CANNOT LET YOU TAKE THAT KEY, MALYSHKA.)

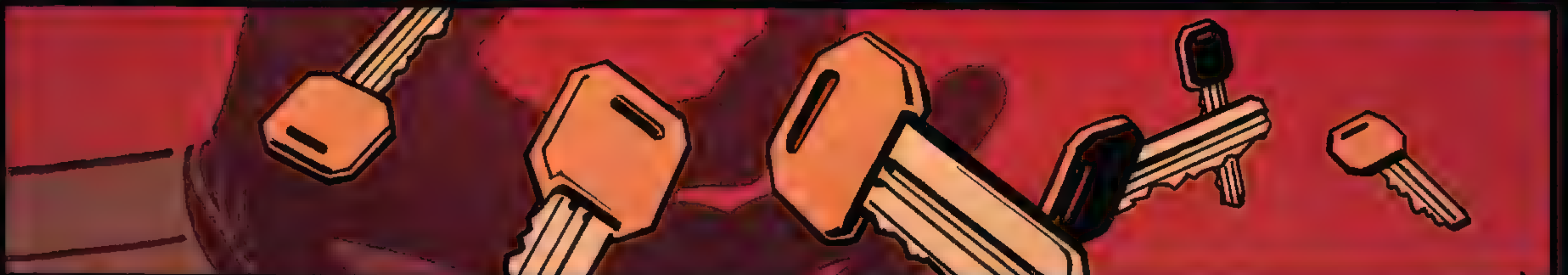
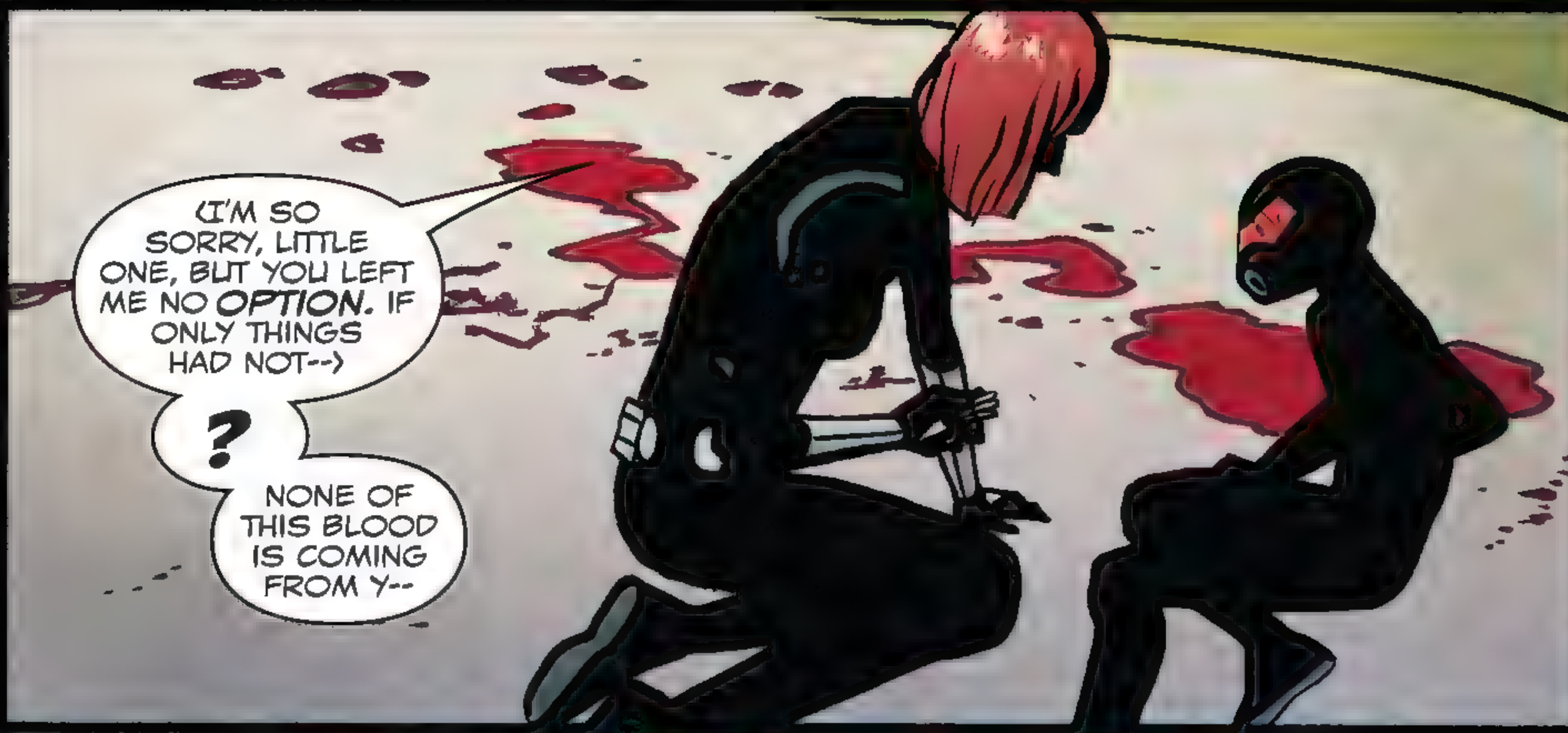
(THOUSANDS OF LIVES ARE AT STAKE.)



(WHAT WILL YOU DO? MAKE ME SMILE TO DEATH?)





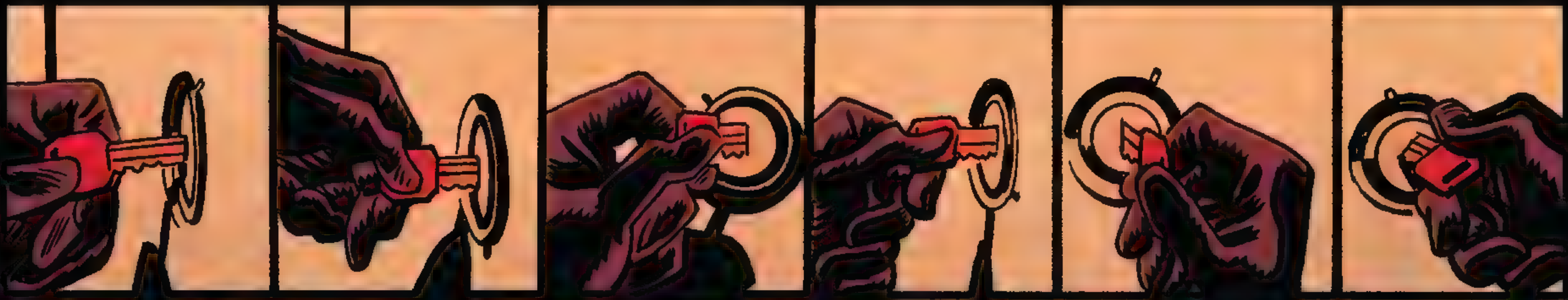




⟨NOT
ANYMORE.⟩

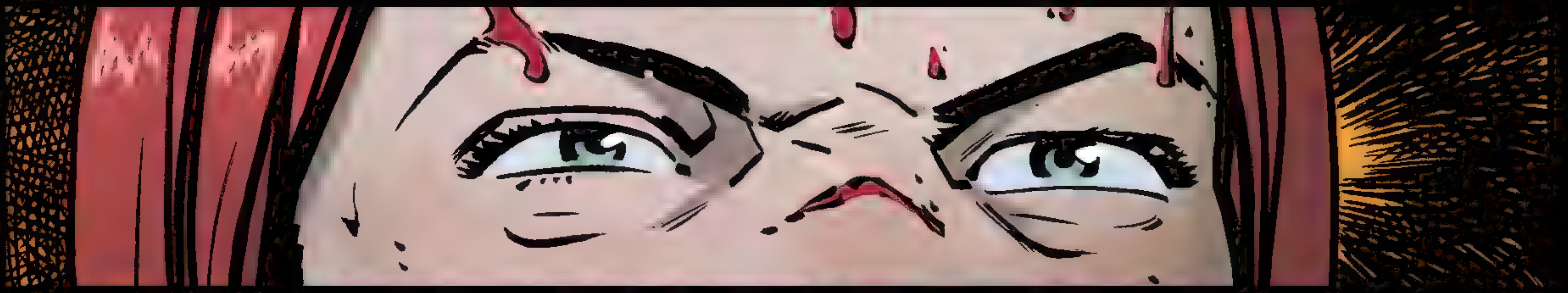
⟨WITH
MOTHER
GONE, SOMEONE
HAS TO ASSUME
HER DUTIES...⟩

⟨...AS
HEADMISTRESS.⟩





SAMUEL 1/6
MW

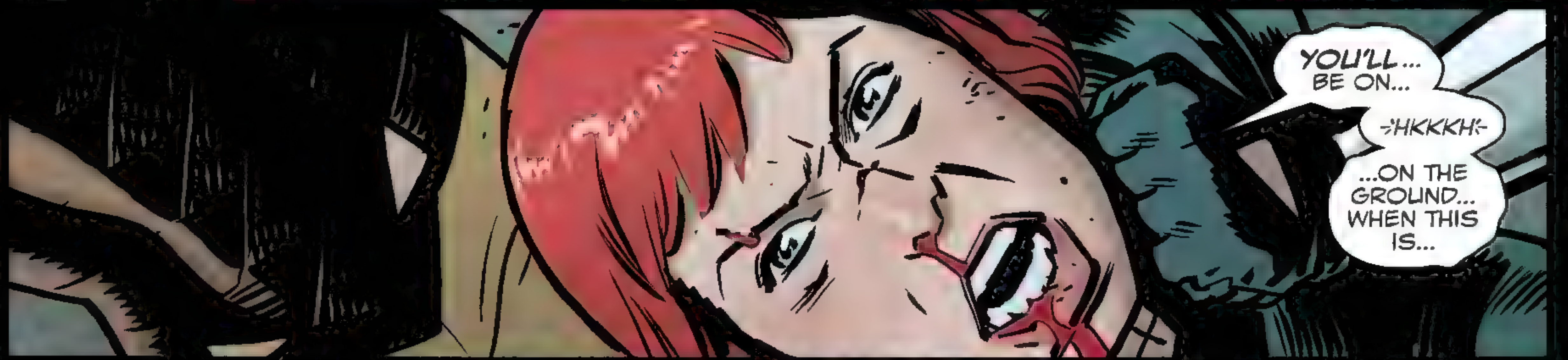


ONCE UPON
A TIME, NATASHA,
YOU INSULTED ME.
YOU **DEGRADED**
ME.

YOU
TURNED
YOUR **BACK**
ON ME.

AND NOW
YOU'RE ON
YOUR **KNEES**
BEFORE ME...AS
IT **SHOULD**
BE.

-:KKKTTKK:-



YOU'LL...
BE ON...

-:HKKKH:-

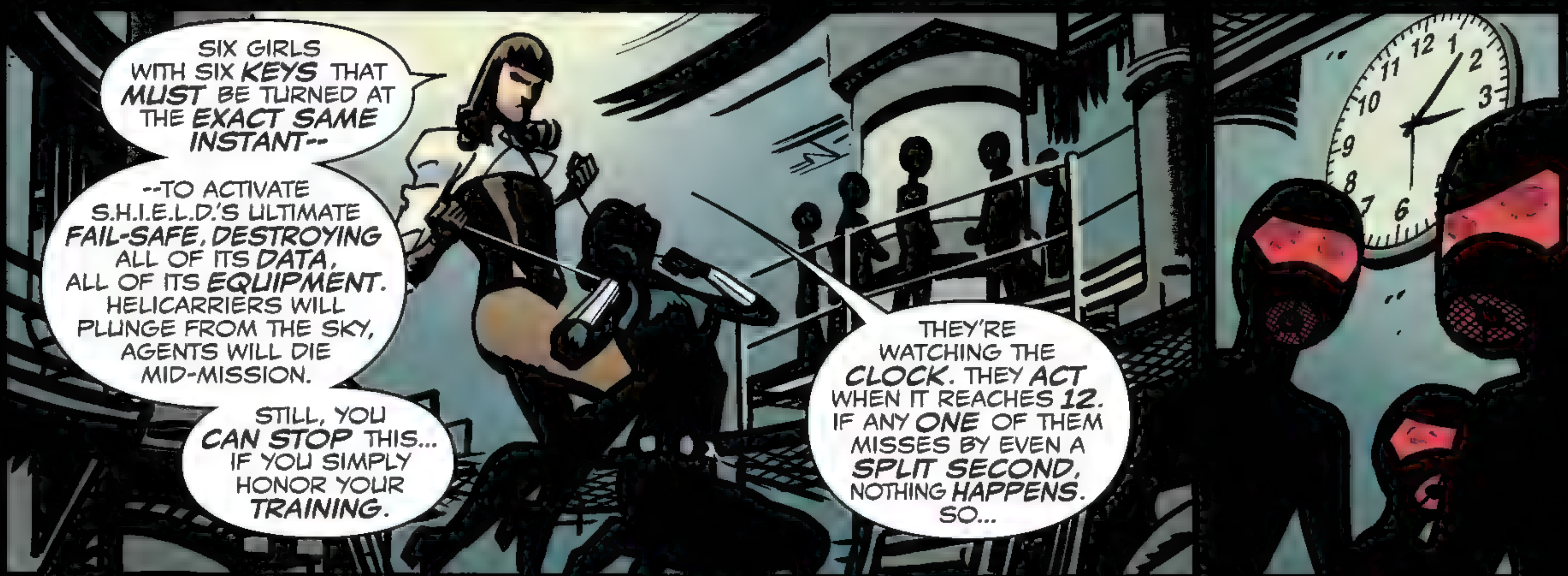
...ON THE
GROUND...
WHEN THIS
IS...



...OVER?
IT'S **ALREADY**
OVER.

THIS
IS HOW
S.H.I.E.L.D.
DIES.

ON YOUR
WATCH.



SIX GIRLS
WITH SIX KEYS THAT
MUST BE TURNED AT
THE EXACT SAME
INSTANT--

--TO ACTIVATE
S.H.I.E.L.D.'S ULTIMATE
FAIL-SAFE, DESTROYING
ALL OF ITS DATA,
ALL OF ITS EQUIPMENT.
HELICARRIERS WILL
PLUNGE FROM THE SKY,
AGENTS WILL DIE
MID-MISSION.

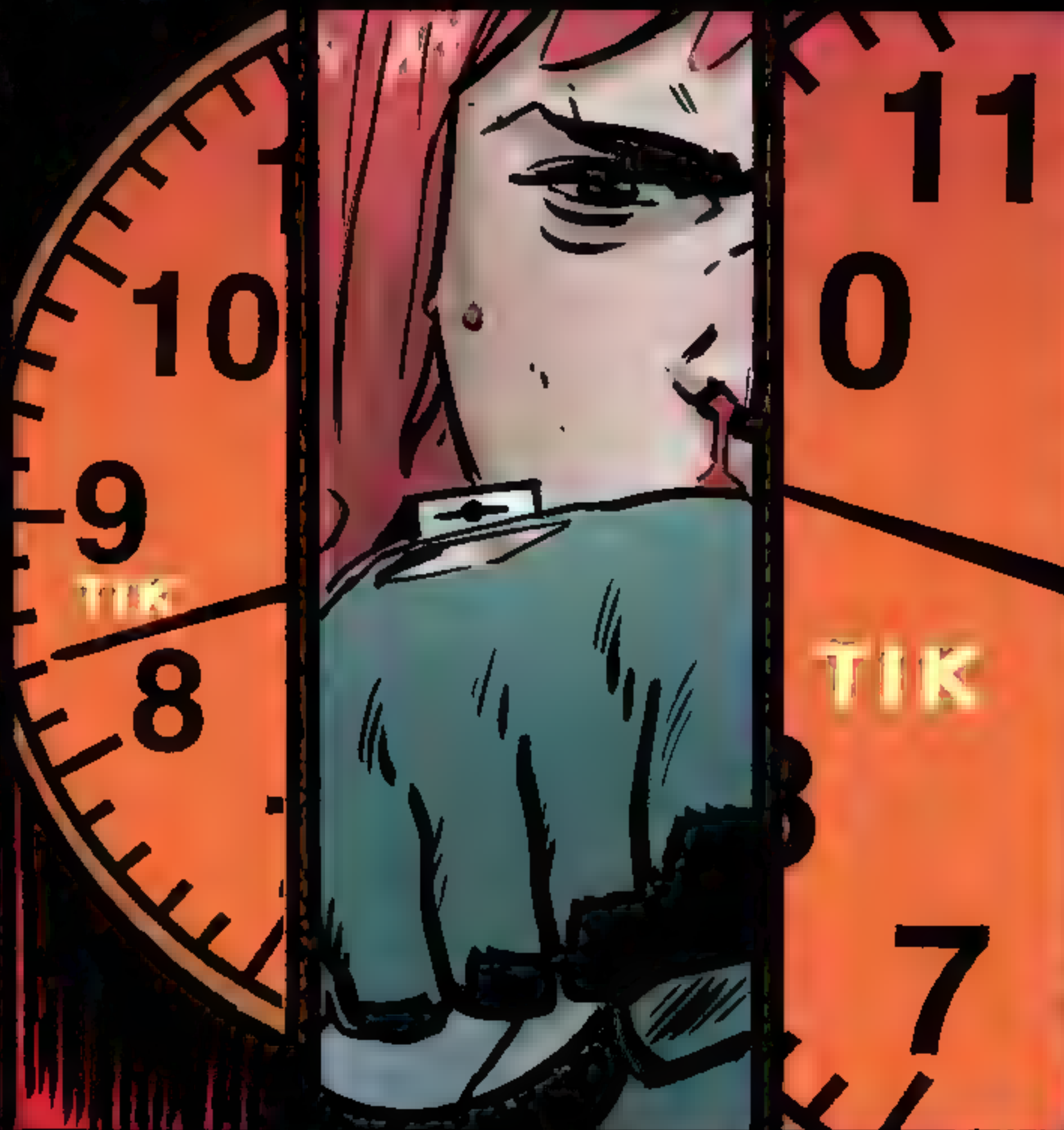
STILL, YOU
CAN STOP THIS...
IF YOU SIMPLY
HONOR YOUR
TRAINING.

THEY'RE
WATCHING THE
CLOCK. THEY ACT
WHEN IT REACHES 12.
IF ANY ONE OF THEM
MISSES BY EVEN A
SPLIT SECOND,
NOTHING HAPPENS.
SO...

...KILL ONE. IT'S YOUR ONLY
OPTION. IT DOESN'T MATTER
WHICH ONE.

KILL
ONE TO SAVE
THOUSANDS.

JUST
LIKE IN
THE OLD
DAYS.



ANY ONE. FOLLOW
YOUR INSTINCTS. I'VE
SET YOUR STING
TO LETHAL.

YOU'RE
RUNNING
OUT OF
TIME.

CHOOSE.

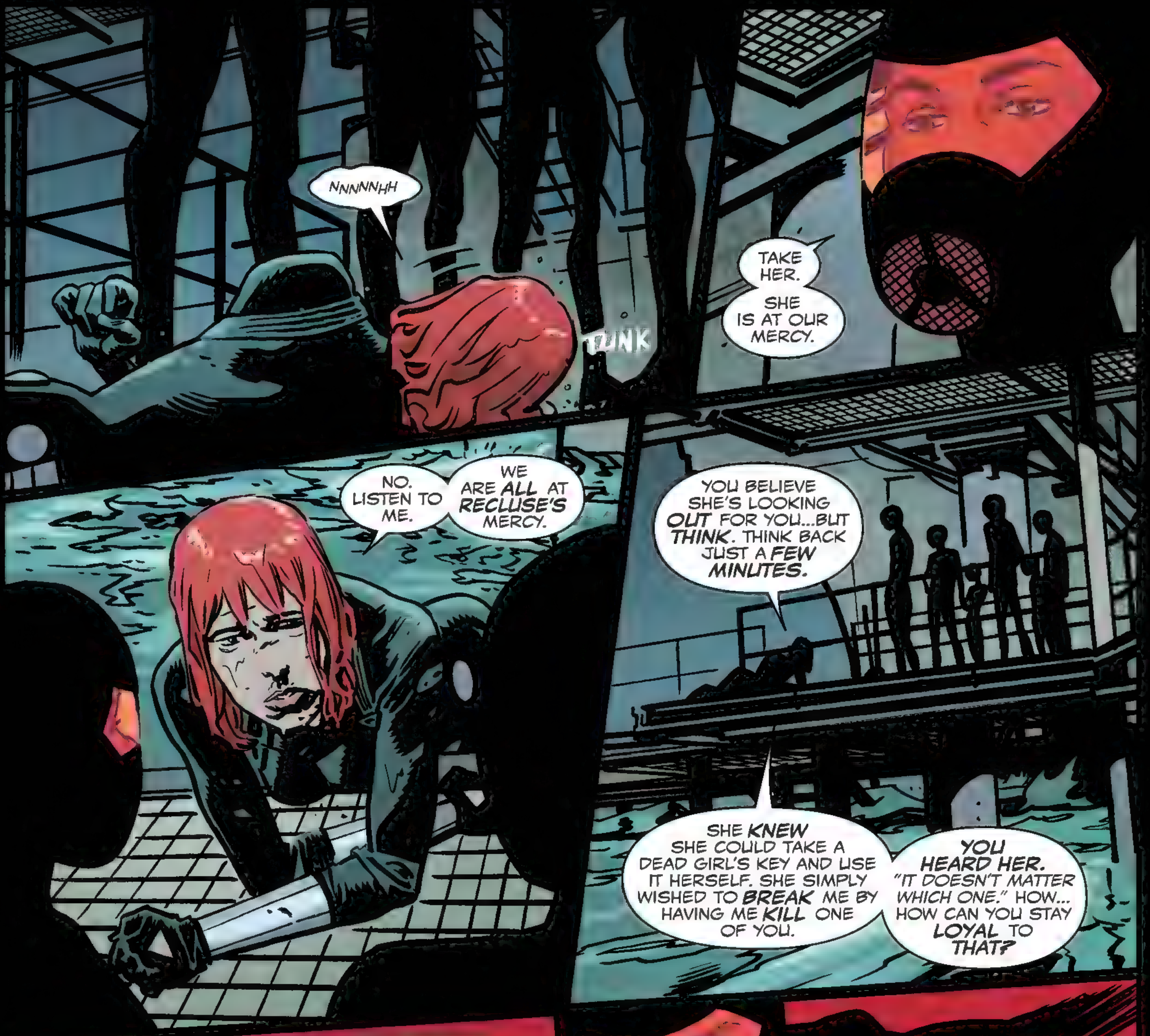


?
NO!

EMERGENCY
FLOOD









DON'T
YOU
POISON
THEIR
MINDS!

DON'T
YOU
DARE!

THESE
GIRLS ARE
MINE!



JUST
LIKE HEAD-
MISTRESS.
APPLE,
TREE.

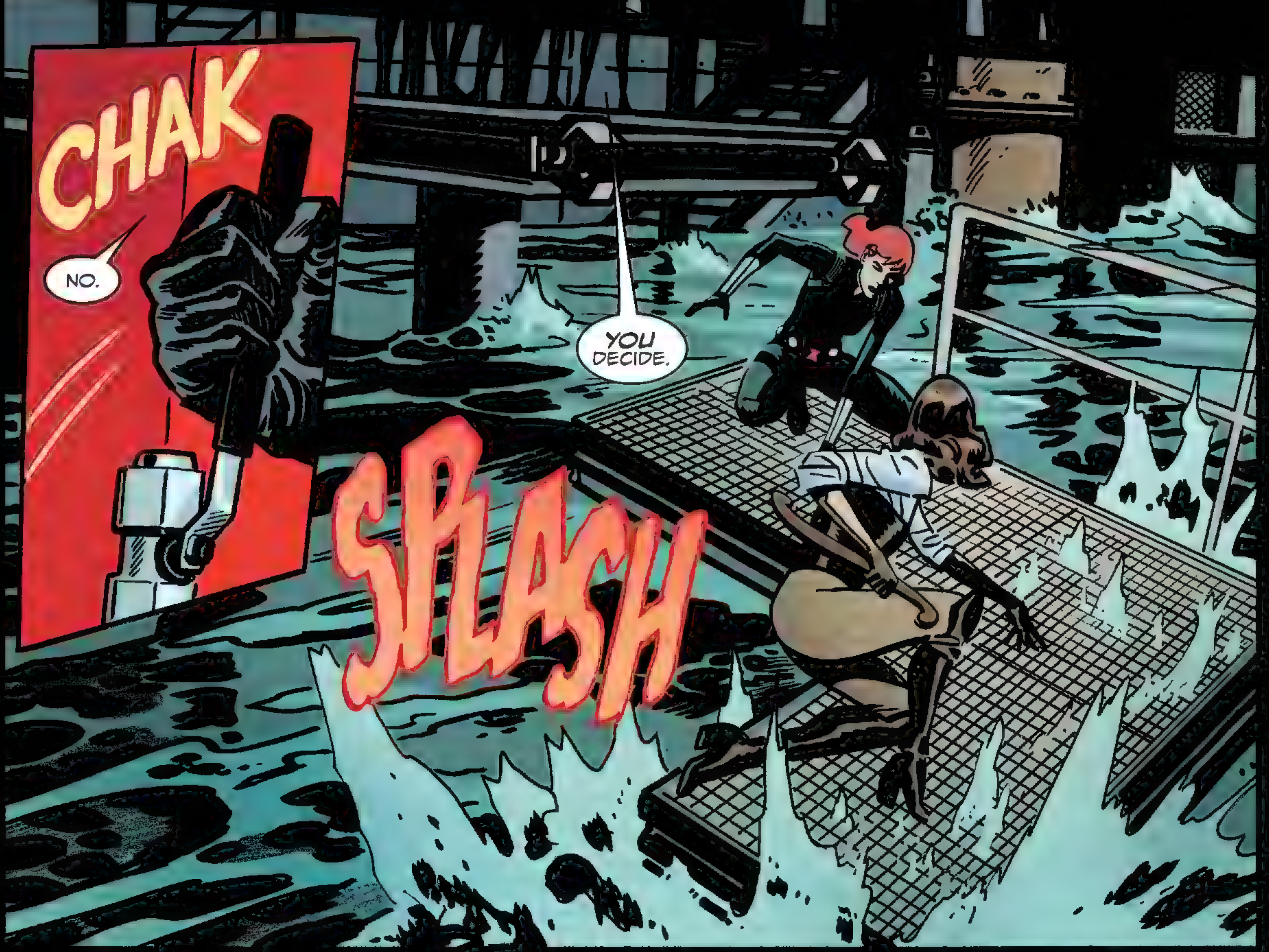
THEY'RE
SIMPLY
WEAPONS
TO YOU. LITTLE
PUPPETS,
NOTHING
MORE.

THEY
DESERVE
LIVES. I'M
GETTING THEM
OUT OF
HERE.



DON'T LET
HER LEAD YOU
ANYWHERE,
GIRLS! ALL SHE
CAN OFFER YOU IS
CHAOS AND
UNCERTAINTY!
I GIVE YOU
PURPOSE!

DECIDE
WHICH ONE
OF US YOU'RE
GOING TO
FOLLOW!

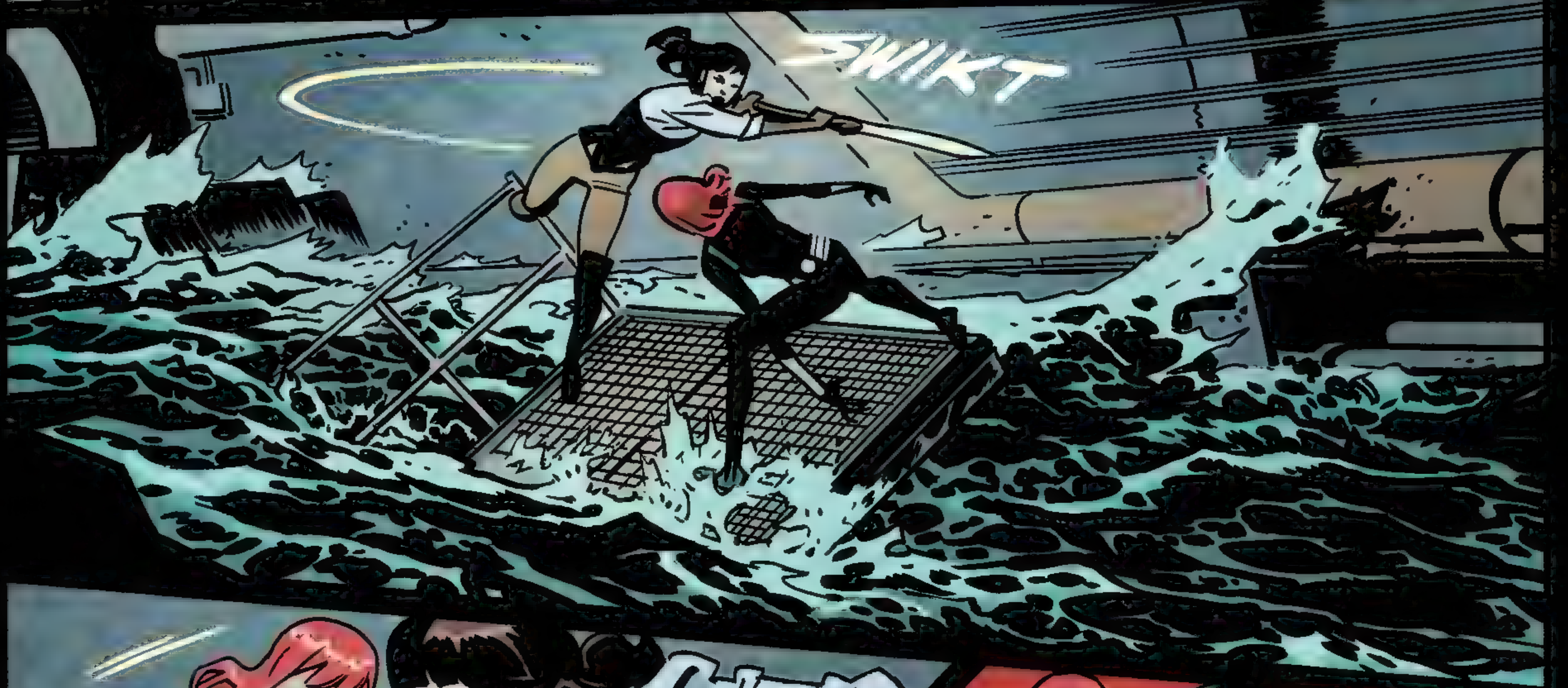


CHAK

NO.

YOU
DECIDE.

SPLASH



YOU SAID I
HAD TO FACE MY
FEARS TO FIGHT
YOU!
I HAVE!

YOU SAID
I COULD NEVER
BEAT YOU!
I DID!
I TORE YOUR
LIFE APART!
SAY
SOMETHING
NOW!

WHAT AN
INTERESTING
BLADE.

I'M
SURPRISED
YOU *COULDN'T*
KILL ME WITH
SOMETHING
LIKE *THIS*.

I'LL
USE IT TO
CLEAN YOUR
BONES!

WELL...

...I'LL
USE IT AS A
HANDLE.

?











THANK--

KAFF

THANK
YOU.

FOR
WHAT?

FOR GIVING
ME ANOTHER
CHANCE AT
YOU?

AND YOU
LADIES...WE'LL
DISCUSS THIS
LATER!

IT TOOK
YOU AND YOUR
BOYFRIEND TO FIGHT
ME TO A DRAW
IN RUSSIA,
NATASHA.

WHY DO
YOU KEEP
TELLING YOURSELF
YOU ALONE HAVE
ANY CHANCE
WITH ME?

BECAUSE
I LEARNED
LESS FROM YOUR
MOTHER THAN
YOU DID.

DO
NOT TALK
ABOUT
HER!

YOU
DO NOT
TALK ABOUT
HER!



I REMAIN
A BETTER
FIGHTER THAN
YOU.
BUT
A LESSER
ASSASSIN.



EXACTLY.
AND DO YOU
KNOW WHY THAT
IS, YOU PATHETIC
RELIC?



BECAUSE
I CARE.

YOU'RE
HERE TO
EXPLOIT THESE
GIRLS.

I'M HERE
TO SAVE
THEM.



WHERE
DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE--

COME
BACK
HERE!



DON'T
YOU DARE
USE MY GIRLS
AGAINST
ME!

BREAK THE
CYCLE, RECLUSE.
THEY NEED NOT BE
RAISED AS YOU
AND I WERE.

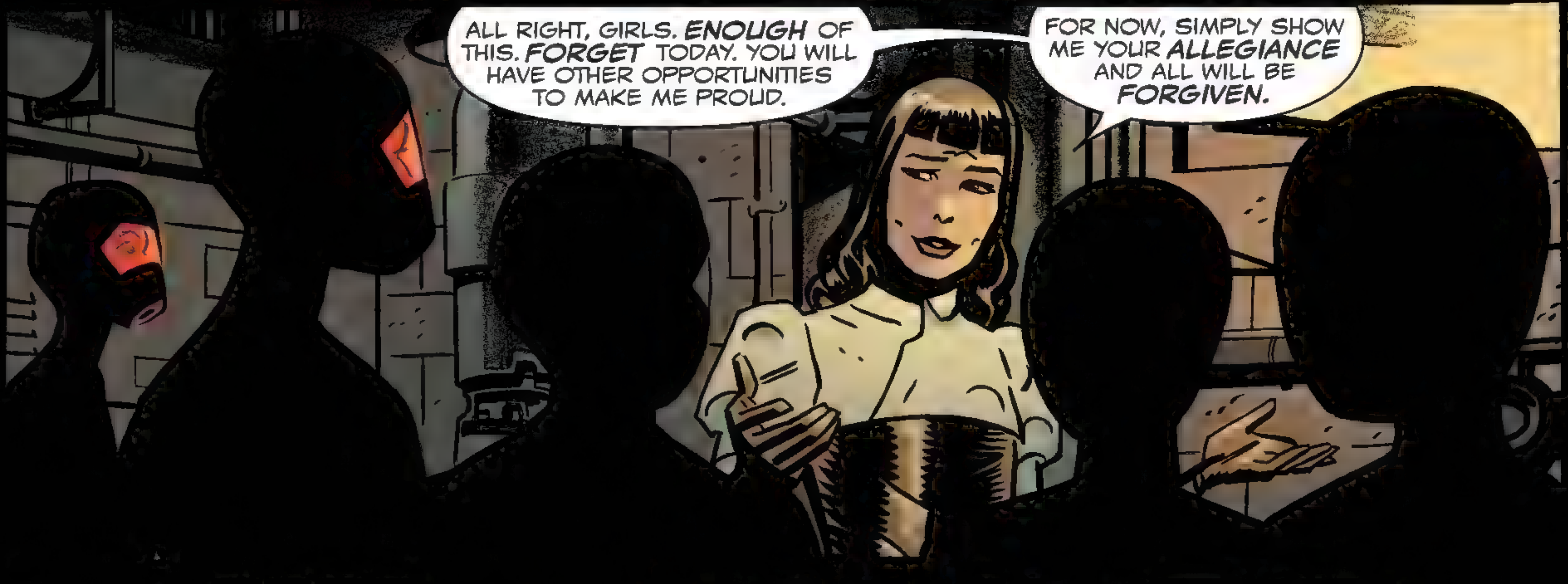
I'M WILLING
TO GIVE THEM
THE CHANCE TO
CHOOSE THEIR
OWN PATH.



ARE
YOU?



YOU
DON'T CARE
ABOUT THEM
LIKE I DO...



ALL RIGHT, GIRLS. ENOUGH OF
THIS. **FORGET** TODAY. YOU WILL
HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES
TO MAKE ME PROUD.

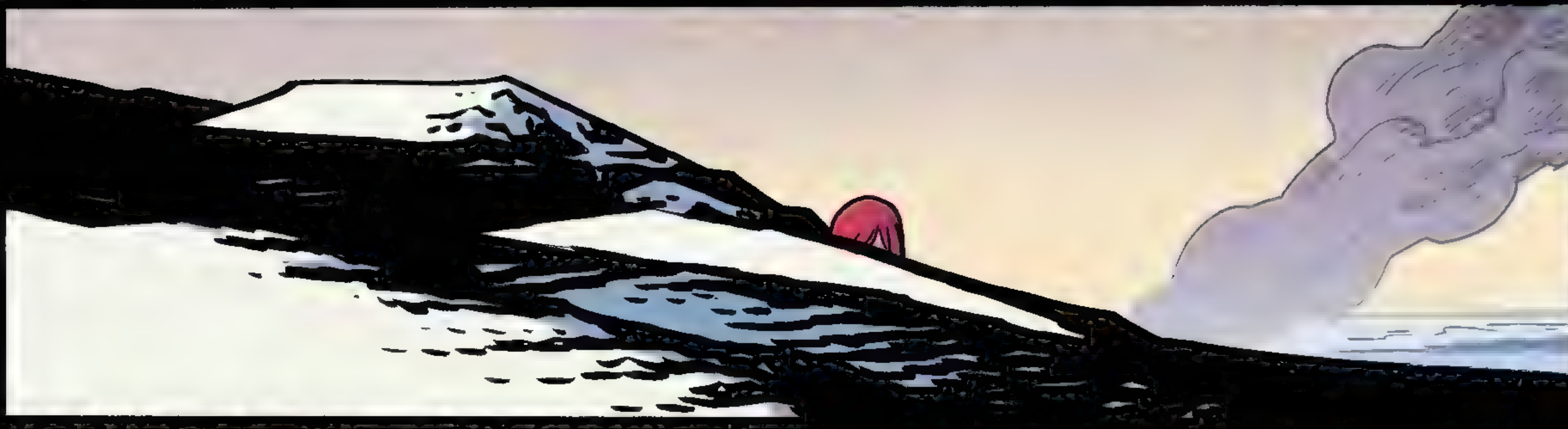
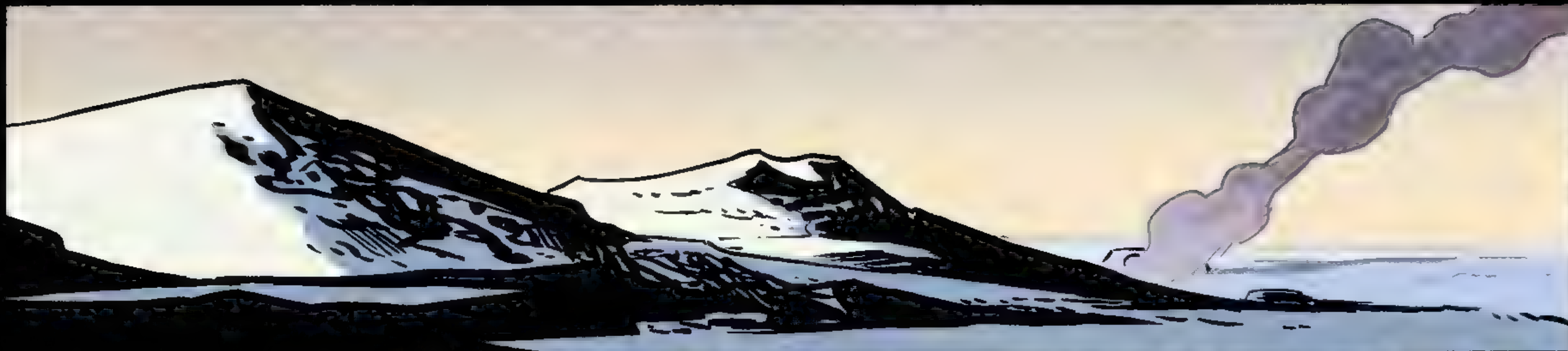
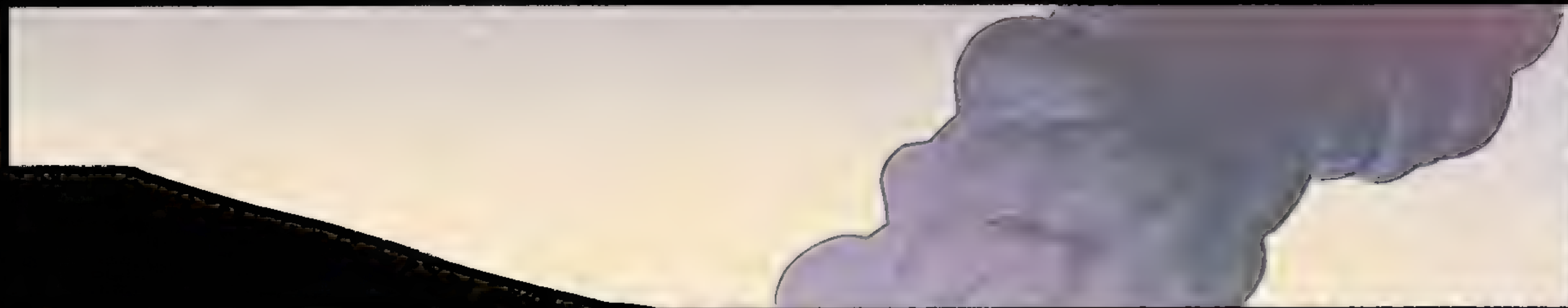
FOR NOW, SIMPLY SHOW
ME YOUR **ALLEGIANCE**
AND ALL WILL BE
FORGIVEN.

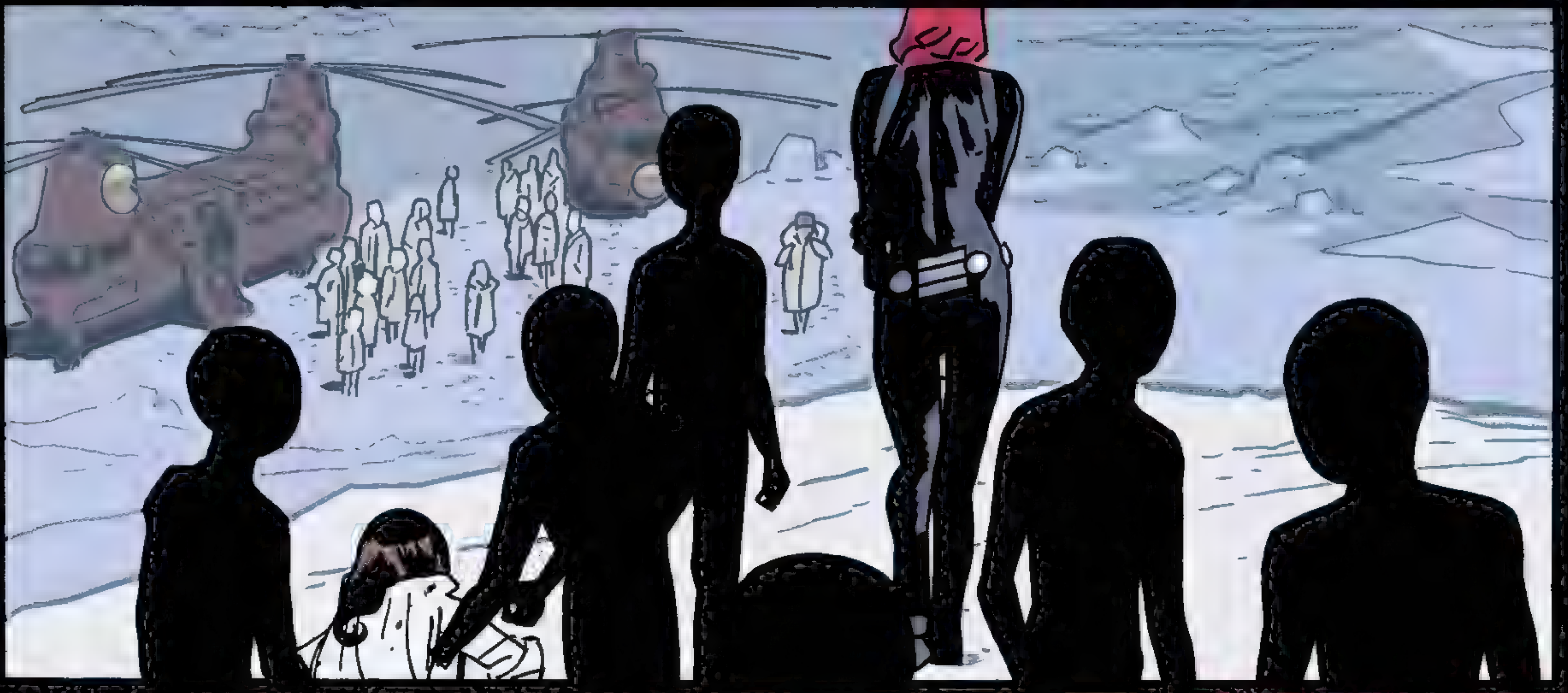


SPISH

GIRLS?

NO,
NO, NO,
NO...





MS. ROMANOFF.

DID YOU KNOW YOU'VE BECOME A SEPARATE LINE ITEM ALL YOUR OWN IN S.H.I.E.L.D.'S OPERATING BUDGET?

WE DID SOME MATH.

WE COULD BUY NETFLIX SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR EVERYONE ON EARTH FOR THE COST OF ALL YOU'VE DESTROYED THESE LAST FEW WEEKS.

MARIA...

...MARIA, I...

SAVE YOUR BREATH AND GRAB A PARKA.

WE'VE BEEN KEEPING A CLOSE WATCH ON YOU. NOT EASY.

BUT WE'VE VERIFIED THAT--DESPITE **APPEARANCES**--YOU WERE BACKED INTO A CORNER TO **PROTECT** S.H.I.E.L.D., NOT TO TAKE US DOWN.

THANKS.

DIRECTOR, YOU HAVE A CALL.



HELLO, ANGELS! STAYING CHILL, I HOPE.

WHAT THE HELL, STARK? WE'RE A LITTLE BUSY HERE--!



OH, I'VE BEEN MONITORING THE SITUATION.

ILLEGALLY.

A DETAIL. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT I'VE ALREADY PLACED YOUR SIX ORPHANS.

REALLY?



THEY'LL BE HANDLED BY A FOSTER-CHILD PROGRAM I CAN PERSONALLY GUARANTEE TO BE THE BEST AND MOST COMPASSIONATE IN THE NATION.

I'VE ALSO PRE-FUNDED EACH GIRL'S SCHOOLING AS FAR AS SHE WANTS TO TAKE IT.



YOU KNOW THEY'RE ALL UNDERAGE, RIGHT?

CHEAP SHOT. AND AS FOR YOU, NATASHA...

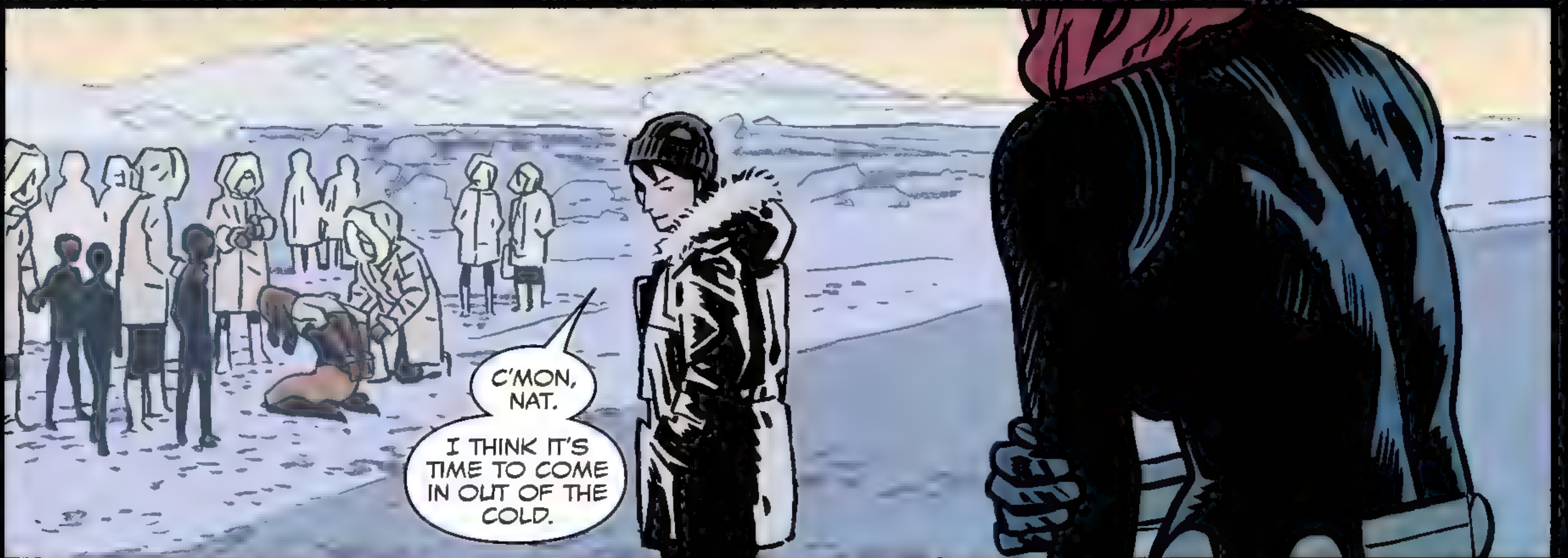


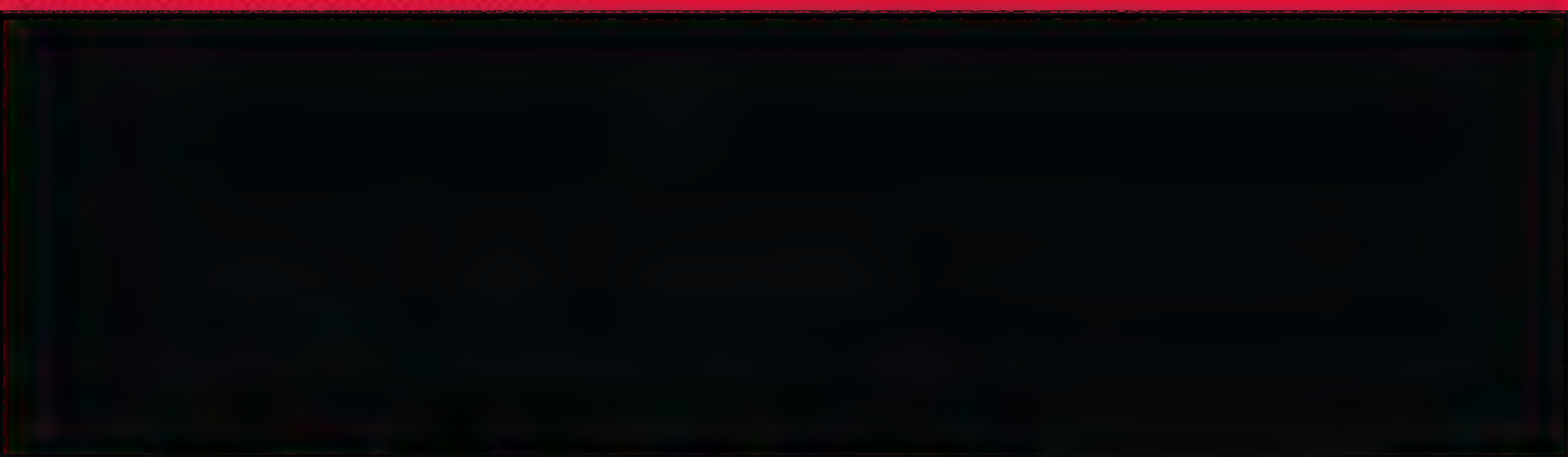
...NEXT TIME, TURN TO YOUR FRIENDS. WE'RE HERE FOR YOU. ALWAYS.



IN FACT, IF YOU'D LIKE TO MEET UP AT MY SUITE IN PARIS, WE COULD--

TAK





PHIL NOTO
NO. 1 HIP-HOP VARIANT



KEVIN WADA

NO. 1 WOMEN OF POWER VARIANT

Black Widow 001

variant edition

rated T+

\$399 US

direct edition

MARVEL.com

series 1

MARVEL



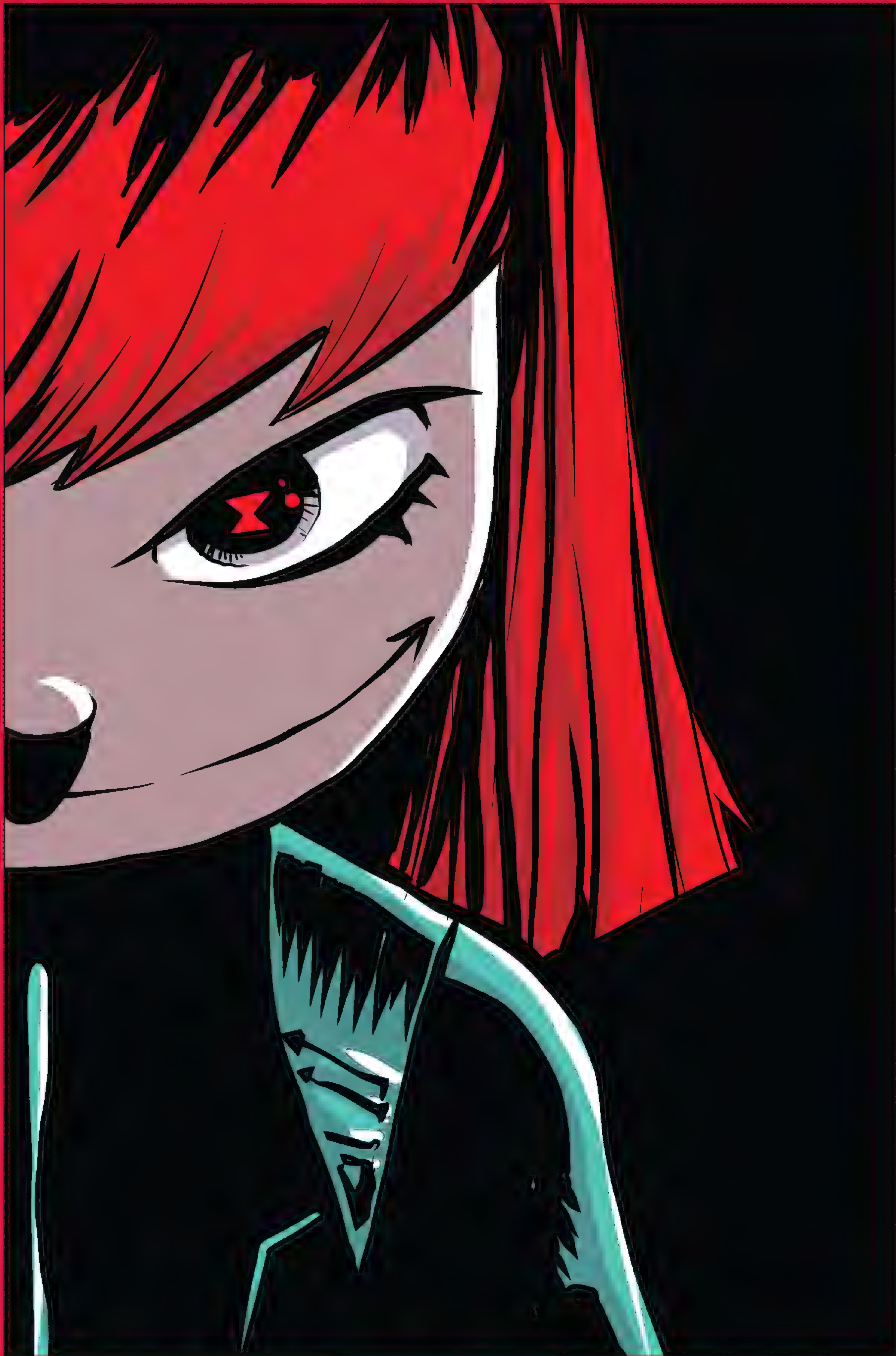
BLACK WIDOW

BLACK WIDOW

rogue spy

JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER

NO. 1 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT



SKOTTIE YOUNG
NO. 1 VARIANT



MARK
WAID

CHRIS
SAMNEE

MATT
WILSON

BLACK WIDOW

ANNIE WU

NO. 2 VARIANT



BLACK WIDOW

A MARVEL COMICS EVENT

CIVIL WAR

BENGAL

NO. 2 CIVIL WAR VARIANT



JOËLLE JONES & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
NO. 3 VARIANT



KARL KERSCHL
NO. 3 HORSEMEN OF APOCALYPSE VARIANT



YASMINE PUTRI
NO. 7 STORY THUS FAR VARIANT



PHIL NOTO

NO. 7 CHAMPIONS VARIANT



JUNE BRIGMAN, ROY RICHARDSON & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
NO. 7 CLASSIC VARIANT

HOLY SMOKES! What a ride, right??? And it's only going to get wilder for Black Widow from here! I have to be honest, I'm jealous of all of you. I know what's ahead for poor Natasha, and as amazing as I think it is (and I think it is AMAZING), you all get to discover it fully formed and with fresh eyes. You lucky ducks. I think you're going to love it.

How could you not? This book has one of the best teams in the business, and I'd like to take a moment to let them all introduce themselves and this book. Without further ado...

Well, we weren't gonna split up the team, that was our first decision. Chris Samnee, Matthew Wilson, Joe Caramagna and I became brothers during our run on DAREDEVIL. When we elected to leave that series, feeling like all the stories we knew to tell about Matt Murdock had been told, we wanted to keep the band together--but doing what? Chris and I talked about every Marvel character out there, from the Vision to the Avengers to Captain America to Nick Fury and everyone in between, but we couldn't land on what we felt was a dream project.

Then, literally as we were blocking out our last DAREDEVIL story, I was at one of Marvel's Creator Retreats when editor Jake Thomas mentioned that Black Widow might be available post-SECRET WARS. The whole team knew instantly that this was a perfect fit. The Daredevil connection was there for consistency, it was a solo book (one of Chris preferences) and because Chris loves this kind of storytelling, it meant we could work more closely than ever, co-plotting the book with Chris handling the way the story is told and me adding final dialogue. I think the finished comic reads like a natural leap from what we were doing in DAREDEVIL and yet feels completely different. And you won't believe the trials we have in store for Widow.

-Mark Waid

Working with Mark, Matthew and Joe on DAREDEVIL is the closest to an ideal working relationship I could have imagined--but with Jake and Kathleen joining in to create Team BLACK

WIDOW, we're taking that all to the next level. This is what I thought making comics would be like ever since I was a little kid. Well, I pictured everyone sitting in a smoky office, wearing ties and fedoras, hunkered over their desks...but this is pretty close.

Gosh. I feel like we started working on this book ages ago and, even though we already have several issues in the can, we're only just getting started. I can't wait for you all to see what we have in store for Nat. Even if we are all making these comics in our pajamas.

- Chris Samnee

As DAREDEVIL came to a close I basically just said, "Take me with you! PLEASE!!!" And here I am, coloring BLACK WIDOW. Why? Maybe because they couldn't find another colorist. I don't know. But what I do know is, we've made a couple of issues of BLACK WIDOW already and this is some of the most fun I've had coloring a comic book. Like Mark said, it has a lot of natural transitions for us coming off of our DAREDEVIL run. But we've also given ourselves new challenges as we dive into Nat's world. As you can see from the comic you've just read, Chris and I wanted to develop a look that differed from our work on DAREDEVIL. I think I can speak for everyone when I say that we are really pleased with the results. I hope everyone enjoyed this action-packed opening and that you all plan to stick around and see what else we've got in store for my favorite superspy.

- Matthew Wilson

But enough from those jokers, what do YOU think? Send your super-secret spy missives to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and remember to mark them OK TO PRINT!

Until next time!

Stay fly, spies.
-Jake T.

All good things must come to an end, and this is the end of our very, very good thing. Glad you enjoyed it! And thanks for calling out Matthew Wilson's awesome work; he's really done some exceptional stuff with this run. As has our incredible letterer, Joe Caramagna, who navigated the pacing and design of these issues expertly!

In fact, our creative team was so great, let's let them have the last word. Take it away, gentlemen!

It's hard to believe that we've already wrapped twelve issues of BLACK WIDOW. Eighteen months ago, I was staring at a blank page trying to piece together the first issue. Today, I can look at all twelve issues in hand and know that all the sleepless nights were worth it. I tried to put 110% into every panel of every page, and it nearly killed me. I'm so grateful to the fans and readers who have been so supportive and vocal about how much they've enjoyed our story. I'm incredibly grateful to Marvel and our editors Jake and Kathleen for letting me run with it and taking a chance on me as a writer as well as an artist. And I'm of course grateful to my Team Widow collaborators Mark, Joe and--the peanut butter to my jelly--Matt, who has upped his game yet again with his work on this book. Regardless of what's to come, this will always be a career highlight for me. Thank you to everyone reading this. It wouldn't be the same without you.

- Chris Samnee

Almost always, the Marvel projects I'm proudest of are the ones I originally said "no" to. I said no to FANTASTIC FOUR, I said no to DAREDEVIL, I said "oh, hell no" to KA-ZAR, and I'm sure there are more. I've been at this a while. So when Team DD (Chris Samnee, Joe Caramagna, Matthew Wilson and I) left DAREDEVIL so Matt Murdock could be nudged in tone more closely toward his TV incarnation, we needed to find something new to do. We weren't going to split up the band.

It was Editor Jake Thomas who approached us about a Black Widow series and, because all my taste is in my mouth, I couldn't have cared less. Natasha Romanoff was a character I respected but had never been able to get a handle on, so my enthusiasm was minimal. But since Chris was excited, I figured it was worth throwing in with him, particularly because he wanted to be more involved in the storytelling as a formal co-plotter. And once he showed us all that first issue in thumbnail form, once he made clear his vision for Nat and her world, he made a convert out of me. (Matt and Joe, perpetually smarter than me, were already on board.) The kinetic energy that Chris brought to the Widow and the stage upon which

she played was flat-out thrill-a-minute stunning. I'd like to think I carried my weight as a co-plotter, but probably not; most issues, the whole rest of the team felt like we were frantically holding on to whatever rocket Chris had let loose that month.

Most issues, Chris included super-rough dialogue in his thumbnails so I'd at least know what was going on as I added the "real" dialogue. That was where I was able to make my strongest contribution, though even then I'd steal from Chris' roughs from time to time. (In my defense, there are only so many ways to say, "Let's move!" or "Behind you!"--And I wasn't about to spend 30 minutes trying to come up with alternative phrasing just to be different.)

And now the end is upon us more quickly than I'd ever have dreamed. Natasha has done quite well by Team Widow (we four mooks plus Jake and underrated Assistant Editor Kathleen Wisneski). What began as a "fine, Chris, whatever" assignment turned into a blast for me and strengthened the way Chris and I collaborate, which is always a good thing. Thanks, Nat. And since I can hear Jake's play-off music, I'll end on that note.

- Mark Waid

When I saw the artwork for that opening scene of the first issue of this BLACK WIDOW run, I knew we were going to have a great time making this book. Here we are, twelve issues later, and I count this run as one of my career highlights. Working with this team on BLACK WIDOW has been an absolute joy in every respect. I hope you all had as much fun reading it as we did making it. It's been a real pleasure!

- Matthew Wilson

Thanks to Chris, Mark and Matt for keeping me around for their BLACK WIDOW run and giving me yet another career highlight. I look forward to what's next!

- Joe Caramagna

And until next time, as always...

Stay weird!
-Jake T.

A KNOCK-DOWN, DRAG-OUT TALE OF ACTION AND ESPIONAGE!

The award-winning creative team supreme of MARK WAID and CHRIS SAMNEE takes Natasha Romanoff to new heights — by forcing her out on the lam! The world's greatest superspy has a lifetime of secrets — and when some of the darkest ones are made public, nobody is safe. As S.H.I.E.L.D. turns on its once-greatest asset, the Widow seeks her own answers. But will Natasha's hunt for the Weeping Lion send her back to the one place she never wanted to go? There's an all-too-familiar room with a dark new name in the Widow's future. And there awaits the deadly Recluse — who's fixated on proving her worth by killing Natasha!

Collecting *Black Widow* (2016) #1-12 — by Mark Waid, Chris Samnee and Matthew Wilson.



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